1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

within which is also the family cemetery in which old men of high rank are buried. No women born outside the village (which, owing to clan exogamy, includes all wives and mothers of clan members) are allowed inside this enclosure, and those born within it (that is to say, the lodge-members' sisters and daughters) are only allowed in when specially invited on some errand by one of the senior members, or on certain ritual occasions.

This organisation into lodges will be fully described in the chapter on Social Organisation. Enough has been said now to enable us to enter the village without trespassing where we are not wanted and to understand something of what is going on.

Dress.

As we go up from the beach we shall have the opportunity first of observing native dress. As may be seen in the photograph of Kowu beach (Plate I), young boys and young girls go completely naked. When they are about six or eight years old, the boys start wearing a plaited string belt of soft material around their waists. This belt will have at first only a single coil, but as they grow older the number of coils increases till the string belt assumes quite lengthy proportions and may be wound as many as six or seven times around the waist. At about the age of puberty the boys put on a new garment. This is a penis-wrapper made out of a banana leaf stripped longitudinally in half with the midrib removed but leaving enough of the central fibre to withstand a certain amount of wear. This leaf is wound round and round the penis spirally, in such a way that the windings continue beyond the glans. This continuation of the wrapper is then drawn up over the string belt and finally tucked in behind it from above. The penis is thus held vertically upwards parallel to the central line of the abdomen, with the testicles completely exposed to view. This is the ordinary dress of youths not yet initiated. On initiation, the banana-leaf wrapper, called *nu-mba-nu-mbe*, is retained as an under-garment, but is now covered by a ceremonial penis-wrapper (*na-avu*) consisting of a flat strip of material plaited by women from thin strips of pandanus-palm leaf, dyed red and ornamented with designs in the dull yellow colour left by immersion in the juice of turmeric leaves. Both ends of the wrapper are so constructed as to leave a fringe of the same material, slit very fine so as to form tassels. This wrapper is wound round the penis in the same way as the underlying banana-leaf wrapper, and the tassels similarly tucked over and behind the plaited string belt. Over the string belt and tassels is now wound a broad bark-board belt called *na-tuve*, about six inches wide, made of the inner bark of a special tree sometimes covered with coconut fibre, wound round in super-imposed coils, which cover the abdomen from above the navel to the groin. This is in turn held in place by a plaited belt called *ne-tuw*, also made by women and in

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

Double-rite performed independently by each village.

The whole double-rite is performed by each village, independently of the others, on its own dancing-ground. Thus, in the case of the dolmen-Maki, now performed only on the Superior Side of the Island, each of the two villages composing it, namely, Pete-hul and Togh-vanu, carries out its own cycle of rites quite separately, while each of the remaining four villages on the Inferior Side carries out independently its own performance of the monolith-Maki newly acquired from Atchin.

THE KINSHIP ELEMENT

Alternate performances by each "line" or matrilineal moiety within the village.

Within each village, the whole double-rite is performed in alternating succession by alternate generations of males, that is to say, by all the men belonging to one "line" or kinship section.[1]

There are thus always, in any given village, two "lines," of which one is always the aspiring "line," composed of those who are performing the Maki and who will, at the culminating ceremony in each part of the rite, perform the chief sacrifice and take new names. These are called *mara maki*,[2] "men of the Maki," or "Maki-men" as I shall call them in the following pages. The other "line" is composed of the Maki-men's fathers and sons, and, in the Maki rites, it is by the descriptive term "fathers and sons" (*temer, natur*) that they are commonly known. It is the members of this "line," and particularly the "sons," assisted on all major occasions by members of other "lines" in the other Vao villages, who do all the hard work, such as hauling and erecting the stones, while the Maki-men provide food for the accompanying feasts, dance and sing ritual songs to lighten their labours, and generally show themselves off to the best possible advantage.

Maki-men are the candidates: "fathers and sons" are the introducers, henceforth known as the introducing "line."

Such are the outward manifestations of the two groups. When we come to examine the character of the rite, however, as one of initiation into the mysteries of symbolic death and re-birth, we find that it is the Maki-men who are the candidates, and the "fathers and sons" who are the introducers and whom I will therefore call henceforth the "introducing line." Thus, each "line" alternately introduces the other, and it is the introducing "line" formed of the "fathers and sons" who are said to be "making the Maki" (i.e. organising it) for *their* sons and fathers who are the Maki-men, and whom these Maki-men have to pay for the right of erecting the stones. This act is called "paying for the stones."[3]

[1] See p. 97. [2] In Atchin *muere n'maki*. [3] See pp. 368, 416.

1:Bayard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

796X
881
604

Mothers' brothers are initiators and give Maki-men their new names.

This "paying for the stones" is, however, not an act of initiation, but one of preparation. The true act of initiation lies in the sacrifice of tusked boars and in the taking of a new name, and here it is the mother's brother from another village who appears as the initiator. For it is to the mother's side of the family, coupled with the figure of the Guardian Ghost, that the sacrifice is made, and the mother's brother himself whom each individual Maki-man "pays for the name" and title that signify his re-birth on the assumption of each new rank.[1]

796X
617

Patrilineal versus matrilineal system.

This sharp distinction drawn between the functions of the candidate's patrilineal relatives on the one hand and his matrilineal relatives on the other is a fundamental factor in the ritual of the public graded society all over the North and North Central New Hebrides and the Banks Islands, expressed clearly in Oba by the fact that the candidate's father used to indemnify the members of the candidate's matrilineal moiety by payment of a pig "as an acknowledgment that he was intruding on their province, that the patriarchal was intruding on the matriarchal system."[2]

In the same way, in South Raga it is said by Tattevin to be "*on account of the patrilineal organisation* that the sacrifices made to the ancestral ghosts are given to the mother's brother, and, in his name, to all the members of his family or clan."[3]

In Vao, where kinship is reckoned on a sectional basis, it is, as we have seen, not only the Maki-men's fathers but also their sons who assist them in every way and for this assistance are duly paid. In this case neither assistance nor payment is grudged, since the advancement of each section or "line" of the patrilineal clan redounds to the credit of the other, and the monuments erected by each, together with the jaws of the tusked boars which are sacrificed at them, remain in the common dancing-ground as witness to the combined achievement of the whole patrilocal community.

Very different, however, is the relation between the Maki-men and their mothers' brothers. For these literally do nothing but receive the payment already mentioned for allowing the Maki-men to proceed with the rite and thus to become ritually re-born. Even this act moreover is grudged, for, as will be seen later, at the moment when each of the chief Maki-men is about to sacrifice his tusked boar at the dolmen, he finds his way to the dolmen barred by all his mothers' brothers, who will not let him pass through till he has yet further propitiated them by the gift of a

[1] See p. 391.

[2] Codrington, 3, p. 114.

[3] Tattevin, 1, 1926, p. 380 (my italics). For amplification of this statement, see present volume, pp. 721 ff.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

CHAPTER XVIII

INITIATION: GENERAL

INTRODUCTION

Two kinds of initiation on Vao: (a) *Initiation into Manhood, performed at home;* (b) *Initiation into Sex, performed on Oba.*

881

THE cultural history of Initiation in the Small Islands is an extremely complicated one. There are at present in these islands two main kinds of initiation, both of which it is necessary for all boys to undergo. These are:

(1) Initiation into Manhood, performed at home. The outstanding elements of this are: (i) the operation of incision, in which the foreskin is slit but left hanging behind the glans, and (ii) a series of elaborate hoaxes.

(2) Initiation into Sex, for which it is necessary to journey overseas to some distant island in the matrilineal dual organisation area, chiefly to Oba, regarded by the Small Islanders as the land of the creator-deity Ta-ghar, whither the novices accompany their elders when these go in their sea-going canoes to trade in pigs. Similar, though lesser, rites are gone through when a boy voyages for the first time to Malo, Raga or even Ambrim, in which latter place the dual organisation persists in the form of the two matrilineal moieties forming the basis of the 6-class kinship system. This form of initiation is thus primarily connected with the matrilineal dual organisation, the creator-deity Ta-ghar, and sea-going canoes.

This curious situation, involving two independent initiation rites, of which Initiation into Manhood consists also of two originally independent elements, and Initiation into Sex has to be accomplished on foreign soil, cannot be explained by an examination of the Vao rites alone, and becomes to some extent intelligible only when we survey the corresponding rites practised by neighbouring people.

Analysis of initiation rites in the Northern New Hebrides into three main types.

881
171

From this survey of the initiation rites recorded by myself and others in neighbouring districts it would appear that there are in the surrounding islands three main types of rite that have become combined in the initiation ritual of the Small Islands.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

These are:

(*a*) A simple initiation rite accompanied by ordeals lasting ten days such as is performed in East Santo, including Initiation into Sex.[1] From the available evidence this would appear to have been the earliest, as it is indeed the simplest, form of the rite.

(*b*) The operation of incision, or in some cases of a peculiar type of circumcision, to be referred to below, both of which automatically preclude any immediate sexual experience,[2] though in certain districts this is counter-balanced by homosexual practices, either real in which the novice becomes the boy-lover of his already initiated tutor, or mythical when it is said that the active part in this relationship is taken by ghosts. The practice of incision is found in the North Central and Southern New Hebrides and in New Caledonia, in all which places it is found in association with the wearing of a special type of penis-wrapper to which special reference will be made below. Incision is also a widespread practice in many parts of Polynesia. Codrington considers that it was introduced from Polynesia into the Southern New Hebrides and thence travelled northwards.[3] Speiser, on the other hand, believes that it was introduced direct from Arue on the south coast of New Britain.[4] It is not my intention to discuss these wider issues, but to confine my brief survey to the North Central New Hebrides, where it occurs in the overtly patrilineal islands of Malekula, the Small Islands, Ambrim and South Raga. So far as this area is concerned, its movement is certainly in a northward direction, as shown by its spread northward from Ambrim to Raga and thence very recently to Maewo.[5] Deacon also records its introduction into West Malekula from Pangkumu[6] on the east coast. In these islands it has almost precisely the same distribution as the forms of public graded society known by variants of the word Maki, and is said in Vao to have been founded by To-wewe after he had introduced the Maki, and not to have been practised in the preceding phases of culture when the graded society was not of the Maki type but belonged to that intermediate between it and the *Sukwe*.[7] The ritual accompanying the operation is found in its simplest form in South-West Malekula[8] and the Sulol district of Ambrim,[9] where it is carried out in the ordinary men's

[1] Speiser, 3, pp. 287-8.

[2] Speiser (3, p. 289) cites a form of initiation on Ambrim lasting one hundred days, in which from the tenth day after the operation the boys have sexual intercourse with a widow. As, however, the boys are said to be only between 7 and 10 years old the statement needs verification, and it may well be that there are two types of initiation as on Vao.

[3] Codrington, 3, p. 234.

[4] Speiser, 6, pp. 128-40, 154-6, 165-8. Here incision (or circum-incision, see p. 476) appears to have been of comparatively late introduction and to have caused a doubling of the initiation rite.

[5] Codrington, 3, p. 234.

[6] Deacon, 4, p. 244.

[7] See pp. 497, 499.

[8] Deacon, 4, p. 245.

[9] Rivers, 3.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

Lodge and lasts only ten days. The operation itself would therefore appear to have been imposed on the earlier short form of initiation listed under (*a*), which it resembles also in the comparative simplicity of the ordeals that the novices are made to undergo, compared with their far greater elaboration in North Malekula.

(*c*) A series of hoaxes in which the initiates performing them represent ghosts and often imitate birds, and produce special noises which the novices are then made to learn. Closely associated with these hoaxes, and in contrast to the other two types of initiation, a special Lodge is built of very tall dimensions, higher than any other building, in or around which the hoaxes take place. Further, in contrast to the short ten-day period observed in the two other forms of the rite, the period of seclusion in these tall specially constructed Lodges lasts for thirty days and includes certain sub-periods lasting seven days. Many of these elements of initiation are, as will be shown below, related to the performances of the *Kwat* society recorded by Codrington from the island of Oba, Maewo and North Raga.[1]

These three main types are combined in the Small Islands' Initiation into Manhood, excepting Initiation into Sex which has been re-introduced.

In the Small Islands all three types of initiation have been combined into the imposing rite of Initiation into Manhood, with the exception of the heterosexual element in the earliest form of the rite, rendered impossible by the operation of incision.

This missing element has been re-introduced in the quite separate rite of Initiation into Sex, which, as we have seen, is not, properly speaking, a Malekulan rite, but one for which the Small Islanders have to journey overseas to Oba or some other island in the matrilineal dual organisation area to the north or east. This re-introduction is, moreover, closely connected with the introduction of the mat-skirt for women into the coastal districts of Malekula, since in the stories concerning the origin of this rite, to be related in a later volume, the introducer was a man who, turning himself into a shark, swam under water to Oba and thence stole one of the mat-skirts that the Oba women were washing and had laid out on the beach to dry, and brought it back for his wife. It is doubtless owing to this re-introduction that this rite, though invested with all the glamour attending a boy's first overseas expedition and of a mysterious quest in unknown lands, is in fact sociologically of comparatively little importance when compared with the more basic Initiation into Manhood. Thus, in the first place, Initiation into Manhood always precedes Initiation into Sex, no youth being allowed to undertake the journey to distant lands in search of sexual knowledge until he has already been

[1] See p. 492. The above three types of initiation appear respectively to correspond roughly with the three culture complexes referred to by Deacon (4, pp. 705-6) as the Dual Organisation, Fringe-skirt and Mat-skirt cultures.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
OO12 Malekula OO12

881 initiated into manhood at home. Secondly, while, as we shall see, Initiation into Manhood is, like the Maki, a communal rite intimately bound up with the whole social organisation and is obligatory on all youths and boys of a given social group once the preparations for it have been made, Initiation into Sex is undertaken only by individuals according to their own desire and at a time that suits their own individual taste.

Having now given some indication of the complex origin of the various elements out of which Initiation in the Small Islands is built up, I will make a brief survey of the North Malekulan rites of Initiation into Manhood, before giving the details of this rite as it is performed on Vao. The separate rite of Initiation into Sex will be described in another chapter entitled "The Pilgrimage to Oba." [1]

INITIATION INTO MANHOOD: GENERAL

(1) INCISION AND CIRCUM-INCISION

881 304 I shall begin with the phenomenon of incision and its relation to the more complicated operation hitherto known as "circumcision," but which, for reasons given below, I propose to refer to as "circum-incision" practised in two restricted areas in the group.

Operations described.

The operation of incision consists briefly in inserting a hardwood stick between the foreskin and the upper or dorsal side of the glans penis, and making a longitudinal slit in the foreskin by cutting on to this with a bamboo knife. The foreskin is not removed, but remains attached to the corona, and, as the wound heals, hangs down exposing the glans.

This is the most usual form of the operation as performed in the Small Islands of Malekula. There are, however, a number of variations. Thus in North Raga two slits are made, one dorsal and one ventral.[2] In another variant reported from Tanna the foreskin, after having been incised in the manner described above, is "cut down on either side of the penis so as to leave a wing of skin on each side. This appears to be gathered under the penis, where after it is healed it forms a lump nearly as large as the glans. The larger the operation, the more of a man does it make the boy." [3]

There are, however, two areas where the operation is carried a stage further, in which the foreskin, after having been longitudinally slit, is then cut round laterally on either side in such a manner that the whole foreskin is removed and thrown away into the water. This is the operation to which Rivers, possibly not knowing how it was performed, applies the

[1] Chapter XX. [2] Speiser, 3, p. 204. [3] Speiser, 3, p. 204, quoting W. Gray.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
OO12 Malekula OO12

term "true circumcision." It will be seen from the description, however, that it is very different from the operation of circumcision as practised by the Jews and so introduced into Europe, and for this reason it is necessary to find for it a distinctive term. Owing to its close connexion with the simpler operation of incision, I therefore propose to coin a new term and refer to this operation in future as "circum-incision."

The main district in which this is carried out is that of the Big Nambas inhabiting the North Malekulan plateau.[1] A similar operation has been described by Tattevin as being performed by the Pornowol in South Raga, among whom, as among the Big Nambas, "the piece of skin that has been removed, as well as the stick and the bamboo knife used during the operation, are thrown into the water."[2]

Penis-wrapper concealing glans and penis only.

Throughout all those parts of the New Hebrides where either incision or circum-incision is performed there is found also a characteristic male dress, namely, the plaited penis-wrapper so distinctive of Malekula, Ambrim and South Raga in the Northern New Hebrides, and the island of Tanna in the south, and entirely absent from the remaining islands, where no such operation takes place. This remarkable garment—which, but for a string or bark-board belt, is the sole article of male clothing—consists of pandanus leaves stripped and plaited by the women so as to form a band which in the Small Islands may be some sixteen inches long by two or three inches wide, dyed red and furnished with tassels at either end. This is wound tightly round the base of the penis, and round and round again, the free end being then tucked under the string belt worn round the body immediately above the hips, the penis being thus held upwards in line with the belly. No effort whatever is made to clothe either the testicles or the root of the penis. The sole purpose of this method of dress is thus seen to be the concealment of one portion of the body only, namely, the mutilated foreskin and the glans penis which would otherwise be exposed.

Such scrupulous care is taken to conceal the exposed glans that not only will a man turn aside when micturating but he will even wear his penis-wrapper while bathing, removing it for his ablutions only when it is under water.

Penis-wrapper not due to fear of sorcery.

Among a people who have few other signs of sexual shame it is clearly important to discover if possible what motives should lead to this apparently excessively prudish behaviour. As part of his attempt to analyse Melanesian culture on lines of simple culture-contact, Rivers advanced

[1] Deacon, 4, p. 263.

[2] Tattevin, 1, 1926, p. 402, and Deacon, *loc. cit.*

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
OO12 Malekula OO12

(2) NAMES BY WHICH THE RITE IS KNOWN IN VARIOUS DISTRICTS

The terms used in Malekula both for the operation itself, whether this be incision or circum-incision, and at the same time for the whole initiation rite of which the operation forms but a part, fall into two groups.

South Malekulan Area

Whole rite called by variants of the term hab or av used for penis-wrapper. Short form of the rite with ten-day period of seclusion.

The first, which I propose to refer to as the South Malekulan group, is based on the syllable *hab* or *av*. Used for the whole rite, including the

secondary development of an earlier sacrificial conception emphasised metaphorically in many biblical passages such as that in which the Children of Israel are urged to "circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiffnecked," and further "the Lord will circumcise thine heart and the heart of thy seed . . . that thou mayest live" (Deut. x, 16; xxx. 6; see also Jeremiah iv. 4; vi. 10; ix. 26). St. Paul also recalls the sacrificial nature of the act when he refers to "putting off the body of the flesh in the circumcision of Christ" (Col. ii. 11 ff.; see also Rom. ii. 25 ff.; Phil. iii. 3 ff.; Gal. ii. 3-9). It appears, moreover, that in early Hebrew times the full operation of circumcision as practised in the historical era was unknown and that it was at one time "sufficient to cut off the end of the foreskin" (Barton, p. 679); in other words, as in Central America, to sacrifice a part, however small, for the sanctification of the whole.

Authorities agree that the Hebrews derived the rite from Egypt, where it was practised chiefly by the priestly and also probably the royal castes and was "a mark of submission to a god, or alliance with a god, a sign of initiation into a god." It is said also that Ra mutilated himself and that circumcision was in imitation of this (Foucart, p. 676).

Here those offering to the gods had to be without physical blemish, and, as among the Hebrews, uncircumcision was a blemish, which it was the object of circumcision to remove.

Among more primitive peoples the same motive is found. Thus the Yoruba call circumcision "the cutting that saves" (Ellis, p. 66), and among the Mahummedan Malays the rite is called *buang malu*, "casting away of shame." Among others, as we have seen with regard to the New Hebrides, the sacrificial nature of such operations is no less evident. Many reasons are given, such as it being a necessary preliminary to marriage or a prophylactic against the dangers of first sexual intercourse, not of course on medical grounds, but as a sanctification of the generative powers. In all cases, however, the basic motive is that of sacrifice, and L. H. Gray (p. 665) comes to the conclusion that it is a preparation for sexual life only "in so far as it is a preparation for the duties and privileges of manhood." It is this latter view that undoubtedly prevails in the North Central New Hebrides and particularly in the Small Islands where, as we have seen, initiation accompanied by incision does not include Initiation into Sex, for which a separate rite is needed.

For a further illuminating discussion of the meaning of bodily mutilations see Crawley, Chapter VI. For circumcision among the Jews see also the article on this subject in *The Jewish Encyclopaedia*.

1: Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
OO12 Malekula OO12

831
304

operation, it has been recorded only from South and South-West Malekula in the forms:

na-hab-habien in Seniang;[1] and
na-av-avien in the shorter of two forms of the rite in Lambumbu.[2]

This word appears to be primarily connected with the short form of incision rite listed on pp. 474-5 under (*b*), for which no special Lodge is built and which lacks the elaborate hoaxes listed under (*c*). It is, moreover, clearly connected with the Seniang *ava'ap*, meaning "penis-wrapper," which, interestingly enough, survives also in Vao under the form *na-avu*, though in this island the name used for the whole rite belongs to the North Malekulan group. Yet another survival is found in the name of the village from which the whole rite in the Small Islands is said to have been derived, namely, *N'av-av*,[3] a village I have never been able to locate and which quite possibly may not exist.

North Malekulan Area

Rite called by variants of a term probably meaning "shark."

The second or North Malekulan group includes the whole of Central and North Malekula and all the Small Islands, and also extends to the Sulol district of Ambrim, where the words used for the rite and for the operation itself are:

Vao	*bagho* (with article *na-mbagho*)
Atchin	*baho*
Wala	*mbahi*
Big Nambas	*bagho*[4]
Laravat	*na-wen bwōgh*[5]
Lambumbu (long form of the rite)	*no-wei na-mbōg*[6]
Ambrim (Sulol) . . .	*pakvi*[7]

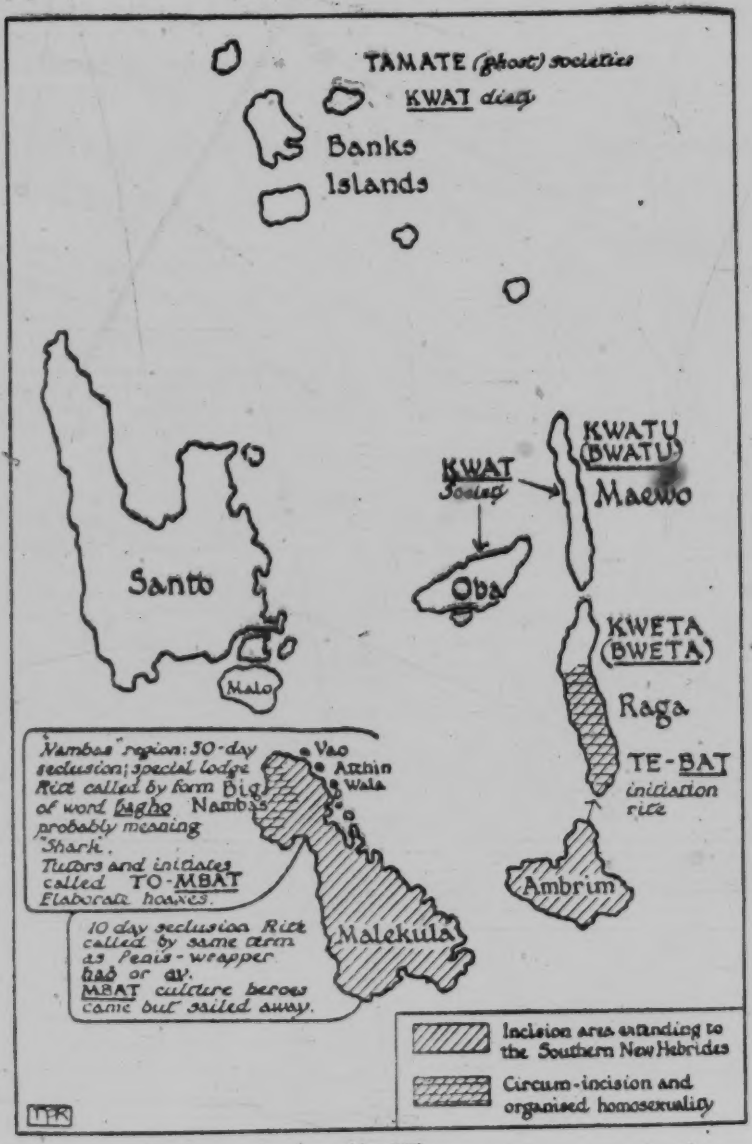
These terms are everywhere, except in Ambrim, associated with the longer form of the rite listed on p. 475 under (*c*) involving a period of seclusion lasting thirty days including subsidiary seven-day periods, and for which a special Lodge of large dimensions is erected in which elaborate hoaxes are carried out.

That this North Malekulan form of the rite is definitely later than that found in the south, which involves a period of seclusion lasting only ten days and has been imposed upon it, is shown in many ways. A good illustration of this is the situation in Lambumbu, where, as already

[1] Layard, 2, p. 231, but Deacon refers to it as *na-tambw*.
[2] Deacon, 4, p. 249.
[3] See pp. 283, 496.
[4] Deacon, 4, p. 260.
[5] Ibid. p. 256.
[6] Ibid. p. 249.
[7] Rivers, 3, and 2, p. 231.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

581
581
304



MAP VII

Sketch-map to illustrate Initiation.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

mentioned, there are two forms of the rite: (*a*) a shorter form still practised in the southern half of this small territory; this shorter form is called by a name belonging to the southern group, namely, *na-av-avien*, of which the essential syllable is *av*, associated with the word used for "penis-wrapper"; and (*b*) a longer form recently introduced from the more northerly district of Laravat, called *no-wei na-mbög*, of which the significant syllable is *mbög*, belonging to the northern group of names of which the Vao form is *bagho*. The duality of this longer form of the rite in Lambumbu is seen in the fact that, though the period of seclusion lasts thirty days, the actual operation is not performed till the tenth. In Atchin this dual origin is even more apparent, for there the operation is performed on the day before that on which the thirty-day period of seclusion in the special Lodge begins, the intervening night being spent by the incised youths in the ordinary village Lodges.[1]

The centre of distribution of these later additions to the rite in North Malekula, of which the chief feature is the elaborate hoaxes, appears to have been in the twin villages of Lawor and Bot-walim on the east coast opposite Wala, whence they spread inland to the Big Nambas and Lambumbu and up the coast to the Small Islands of Wala and Atchin, whence it is only now beginning to penetrate Vao.

So struck was Deacon with the hoaxes that, speaking of the Big Nambas, he says, "The importance of *bagho* lies, not in the circumcision itself, but in the series of performances or 'hoaxes' which take place during the thirty days' seclusion." [2] He later elaborates this theme by drawing a striking parallel between the whole initiation rite as now performed in North Malekula and the "devouring monster" type of ceremonies found in such districts as the Finsch Harbour area of the Mandated Territory of New Guinea.[3] There can be little doubt that this parallel is essentially correct.

Further evidence for this is the way in which the operation itself is likened to the biting of a shark, the chief devouring monster in this part of the Pacific, associated in the Small Islands of Atchin and Wala with the Guardian Ghost. Thus in Atchin the operation is called *bahi e hatsi*, "the shark bites," [4] and the hardwood stick inserted between the foreskin and the glans penis is called *memen bahi*, "the shark's tongue." It is indeed probable that the name given to the whole rite originally meant "shark," as seen in the very close similarity between the words used for it in North Malekula cited above and those used for "shark." Thus, the Wala word used for the rite, namely, *mbahi*, is philologically identical

[1] See also p. 510. [2] Deacon, 4, p. 264. [3] Ibid. p. 268.
[4] Compare the gong-signal called "the ghost bites," sounded at the moment of re-birth, indicated by the taking of new names in the Ni-mangki and Nelemew rites of the village of Vevenah in North-West Malekula (Deacon, 4, p. 370).

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

with the Atchin word for shark, *bahi*, one of a long series of Melanesian words meaning "shark," including

Atchin	*bahi*
Mota	*pagoa*
Gilbert Islands	*bakoa*
Marshalls	*bako*
Ponape	*poko*
New Guinea [1]	*paowa*

all derived from the Indonesian *pa-iwak* meaning "giant fish." What is apparently a dual use of the word is seen in the phrase used on the morning of the operation in the Sulol district of Ambrim, namely, "*pakvi* is going to fight today," [2] in which *pakvi* is the name of the rite though the phrase can only mean that it at the same time represents a devouring monster.

Circum-incision called *Kol-kol*

The only term that I recorded as being applied specifically to circum-incision is that given to me by the natives of Atchin, who themselves only incise, for the operation of circum-incision performed among the neighbouring Big Nambas. This word is *kol-kol*, which I think can hardly be related to the *kolekole* rites in the Banks Islands, but is more likely to be connected with the same two syllables appearing in the name given to the creator-deity *Bar-kol-kol* or *Bar-kul-kul* in South Raga and in the neighbouring district of Olal on Ambrim, in which latter place, according to Suas,[3] he is believed to have introduced circum-incision. What further significance is attached to the word I cannot say, though Tattevin [4] suggests that the syllable *kol* in *Bar-kol-kol* means "strong." Possibly relevant to this is the fact that both among the Big Nambas and in South Raga circum-incision is associated with the organised homosexuality between novices and their tutors referred to below, and that among the Big Nambas it is said that the purpose of this is to make the passive boy-lover's male organ "grow strong." [5]

(3) HOMOSEXUALITY

Organised homosexuality a feature of circum-incision areas.

I have already called attention to the organised practice of homosexuality existing in the two areas where circum-incision replaces the more usual incision, namely, among the Big Nambas and in South (and apparently also in North) Raga. The explanation usually advanced with regard to the Big Nambas is that the chiefs have so many wives [6] that the commoners have to content themselves with substitutes in the form of

[1] Taken from Codrington, 2. He does not state what part of New Guinea.
[2] Rivers, 3. The corresponding phrase in Atchin is *baho pu pal*, meaning "*baho* will sacrifice."
[3] Suas, 1911, p. 906. [4] Tattevin, 1, 1926, pp. 389-90. [5] See p. 488. [6] See p. 740.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

boys. This explanation is, to say the least of it, unlikely, and is quite certainly not applicable to South Raga where there are no chiefs.

Homosexuality among the Big Nambas.

If we examine the facts it is found, on the contrary, that homosexuality is in this area intimately bound up with circum-incision. In Deacon's words, "When it has been decided to hold the circumcision rites, the father of each candidate seeks out someone who will act as guardian to his boy during the period of seclusion. . . . Such a guardian is called *dubut*; the novice or candidate is usually called *mugh vel*. The relation between these two is, henceforth, of a very special nature, to understand which it is necessary to know something of the organisation of male homosexuality in this district.

"Among the Big Nambas, as in North Raga, homosexual practices between men are very highly developed. Every chief has a number of boy-lovers, and it is said that some men are so completely homosexual in their affections, that they seldom have intercourse with their wives, preferring to go with their boys. Up to the time that a boy assumes the bark-belt, the badge of the adult male,[1] he should not take a boy-lover, but himself plays this rôle to some older man. It is only after he has donned the bark-belt that he enjoys this privilege. It is clear, then, that for some time before a boy is circumcised he belongs to one of the older men. A boy-lover, like a circumcision candidate, is termed *mugh vel*, and he refers to his 'husband' as *nilagh sen*.[2] . . . The association between a *nilagh*

[1] The bark-belt has nothing to do with initiation, and is assumed apparently without ritual some time later.

[2] *Nilagh* probably consists of the indefinite article *ni-* and *lagh*, the equivalent of the Vao *laghe*, "to marry." *Sen* is clearly the third person singular possessive pronoun meaning "his," so that *ni-lagh sen* means "his *ni-lagh*," and Deacon's subsequent phrases "a *nilagh sen*" and "the *nilagh sen*" are anomalous.

Deacon points out that this term is that usually used for the "sister's husband," adding, however, that when employed by a tutor for his boy-lover "it is used in jest, for the rules regulating the behaviour of relations by marriage make it impossible for a man to have homosexual connection with his wife's brother," this individual being equivalent to the sister's husband through the operation of sister-exchange marriage. Whether Deacon was right or not in saying that this kinship term is used in these circumstances only in jest (and he never himself penetrated the Big Nambas country), it is not without interest to note that, according to Professor Radcliffe-Brown quoting from Kilaatsch, in the southern part of the Kimberley district of Western Australia, where there is a 4-section system of kinship, the rules governing homosexual intercourse are in fact similar to those governing marriage. That is to say that it is there the custom for a man before marriage to take as a boy-lover a member of the prescribed kinship section from which he must later obtain his wife, and who is therefore sociologically equivalent to the wife's brother and sister's husband, such intercourse being forbidden with a boy of any other kinship section as strongly as if the relation were a heterosexual one. The custom differs from that among the Big Nambas in that, in Western Australia, homosexual intercourse is not usual after marriage, but the kinship regulation is so similar to that indicated by the Big Nambas terminology that it may be questioned whether this is in fact used only "in jest," and strongly suggests a similar regulation among these North Malekulan people.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

sen and his *mugh vel* is a very close one; indeed, the former has complete sexual rights over his boy. . . . The boy accompanies his 'husband' everywhere; works in his garden (it is for this reason that a chief has many boy-lovers), and if one or other of the two should die, the survivor will mourn him deeply. . . .

"Whether it is the *nilagh sen* who is asked to play the part of *dubut* [guardian] during the circumcision rites is not certain, but after the arrangements for circumcising the lad have been made, the *dubut* has exclusive sexual rights over him. He is now the boy's 'husband' and is extremely jealous of any other man, not excepting the guardians of other boys, securing his *mugh vel* and having intercourse with him. So much is this the case that he will not allow him out of his sight. The *dubut* himself, however, cannot have sexual access to the boy throughout all the thirty days' seclusion which accompanies the circumcision rites. From the time of the operation until the wound is healed, intercourse is forbidden, and the *dubut* only plays the part of a guardian who cares for the novice's physical needs. But when the wound is healed he resumes his 'marital' rights and continues to have relations with the boy until some time later the latter purchases his bark-belt. The reason, or rather the rationalisation, which the natives put forward for their homosexual practices is that the boy-lover's male organ is caused to grow strong and large by the homosexual acts of his 'husband.' This growth of the penis is supposed to be complete by the time that the bark-belt is assumed." [1]

On the thirtieth day the novices issue from their seclusion, and each purchases his newly won penis-wrapper from his maternal uncle. "He does not acquire the bark-belt on this occasion, but at some later date (the length of interval was not stated and probably varies) the erstwhile novice pays his *dubut* a few coconuts or some tobacco for it. Until this payment is made the *dubut* continues to have homosexual relations with the lad, but when once the latter has assumed his bark-belt this bond is severed and he, being now a 'man,' can take a boy-lover himself." [2]

Homosexuality symbolises a spiritual connexion between the living and the dead in the male line of descent.

It is, I think, quite clear from this, and from the facts that organised homosexuality is associated with circum-incision also in Raga and that neither are found elsewhere in the group, that, whatever may be the various causes of homosexuality in other parts of the world, it is here definitely connected with circum-incision. In seeking a reason for this we must, I think, be careful not to dismiss as pure rationalisation the natives' statement recorded by Deacon that the reason for homosexual acts is to make the boy-lover's organ grow strong.[3] Such fantasies are

[1] Deacon, 4, pp. 260-2. [2] Ibid., 4, p. 267.
[3] Compare also the Tanna belief that the operation itself makes a man fruitful (see footnote p. 479).

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

common with homosexuals among ourselves, and in the special case now being considered we have to remember two facts. First of these is the high esteem in which the penis is held, as seen in the extreme reverence for the glans due to the operation which is itself a sacrifice. In the second place, the Big Nambas represent an extreme form of patrilineal culture which they have carried to a pitch exceeding all other New Hebrides tribes in the very low status which they accord to women. It would appear, therefore, that both circum-incision and organised homosexuality are an expression of the extreme holiness of men over against women and of the triumph of patrilineal descent over the former matrilineal system. In this way, just as in the Maki on Vao the continuity of divine inspiration is transmitted to each generation by means of physical contact with the kava root held by the Speaker who himself represents all those ancestors who have previously performed the rite,[1] so I suggest that among the Big Nambas the act of homosexuality may well represent to the natives a similar transmission of male power by physical means. That this power comes, moreover, from the ancestors in direct succession and not merely from the active partner in the union, and is therefore a spiritual conception, is shown, I think, by one of the "hoaxes" recorded from Lambumbu. In these hoaxes the actors, who themselves have, of course, already been initiated, represent ghosts, and on one occasion a number of them "lie down on their backs, in such a way that the feet of one man rest by the head of the next. In this way a file of prostrate bodies is made to reach from the door of the seclusion hut as far as the gongs. *Nevar*[2] leaves (such as are used for cooking puddings) are then rolled up, strapped around with others and fastened to the men so that they reach, like gigantic penises, from one man's middle, across his belly, chest, and head, almost to the next man's testicles. These men now lie with their eyes shut and sing in a faint mysterious manner. It is dark. The candidates are led out and made to go up and pull the huge penises, which wobble in a terrifying manner."[3] We have already seen that the upright slit gongs represent ancestors, so that, despite the farcical nature of the hoax, which is in keeping with all such performances in North Malekula and the Small Islands, there can be little doubt that the intention is to symbolise continuity with the ancestral ghosts in the male line by means of the homosexual act. So, just as in some matrilineal communities the female line of descent is conceived of as an umbilical cord joining all generations to the first ancestress, so here the continuous penis unites all those belonging to the male line of descent.

Once the practice of homosexuality became established, though primarily on spiritual grounds, it is easy to see how by a process of secular-

[1] See pp. 282, 376.

[2] Atchin *re-war*.

[3] Deacon, 4, pp. 253-4. For other hoaxes see ibid. pp. 253-5, 263-6; also Harrisson, 2, pp. 47-8. Yet others will be given in my forthcoming work on Atchin.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

isation it could be adopted as an everyday practice in the manner described by Deacon, and has led also to the adoption of the very large penis-wrappers worn by these men.

Active homosexuality in circum-incision areas replaced in the Small Islands by threats of homosexual action on the part of ghosts.

So much for the Big Nambas. From Raga, the only other area from which organised homosexuality has been reported, we have no details by which to test the validity or otherwise of what has just been suggested.

When we turn to those tribes in this area which practise only the simpler operation of incision, we find that, though homosexuality exists among them, it is unorganised and not carried to anything like the same extent as among the Big Nambas.[1] Thus in the Small Islands though novices address their tutors (or guardians), as among the Big Nambas, as "husband" and in some cases the tutor reciprocates by calling his novice his "wife," they do not necessarily have homosexual relations and the terminology does not extend into secular life, but, on the contrary, the novices throughout the rites are constantly threatened with homosexual action on the part of ghosts.

Relation between incision and circum-incision.

Such threats without action suggest the possibility that the whole motive of ghostly homosexuality has been derived from the circum-incision area, and in this case Rivers may be right in regarding incision as being a degraded form of circum-incision, though not on the grounds he states. On the other hand, the Small Islands attitude towards ritual homosexuality as a spiritual phenomenon connected almost exclusively with ghosts and with initiation may indicate a more archetypal view. In this case circum-incision as an exaggerated form of incision would fall into line with other exaggerated forms of culture indulged in by the Big Nambas such as their extreme cannibalism and the incessant wars they wage among themselves.

I do not propose to attempt to solve this problem, but will content myself with pointing out the fact that, while the operation of incision is spread over almost the whole of the Southern and Central New Hebrides, circum-incision as practised among the Big Nambas and in South Raga occurs only in the extreme north of this area. Here also the moot point is raised as to whether it is the starting-point from which the degraded practice of incision spread south or whether, since according to Codrington incision came from the south, it is an ultimate development and is itself an exaggerated form of incision. In this respect it must be remembered that Codrington's evidence rests on the very slender foundation of a purely local movement from Ambrim to Raga and very recently northwards to Maewo. But since any coastal movement spreading from Malekula to

[1] See p. 487.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
OO12 Malekula OO12

Hocart further points out that the custom of cross-cousin marriage was at one time much more widespread than it is today, suggesting that it may formerly have occurred also in Egypt. However this may be, it is interesting to note that in a 4-section system the male cross-cousin is the brother of the prescribed bride, so that, if we may take the evidence that in the hill tribes of Fiji men marry their mothers' brothers' daughters as indicating the former existence of a 4-section system in that island, this evidence falls into line with the fact pointed out above that in Western Australia and possibly also among the Big Nambas a man took as his boy-lover a member of his wife's marriage section, and that it was only later that this love-relationship turned into one of joking and mutual violence.

(4) THE *KWAT* ELEMENT

The last subject to be dealt with in this survey of Initiation in North Malekula and the Small Islands is the third element listed on p. 475 under (*c*), of which the chief features are the hoaxes and the thirty-day period of seclusion. Closely bound up with this is a special term applied in this region to the guardians or tutors [1] who among the Big Nambas are also the novices' chief partners in the homosexual relationship. This term, applied irrespective of whether the operation itself is that of incision or circum-incision, has approximately the same geographical distribution as the term *bagho* and its dialectical variants, all probably meaning "shark," used to designate the newer form of the rite. The corresponding term for novice has the same distribution. Recorded examples are:

	Guardian or Tutor	Novice
Vao	*to-mbat*	*mov ghal*
Atchin	*to-bat*	*moh wal*
Matanavat	*tu-mbat* [2]	—
Big Nambas	*du-but* [3]	*mugh vel*
Laravat	*n-to'mbat* [4]	*murh vel*
Lambumbu (*no-wei na-mbŏg* form of the rite)	*tŏ-mbat* [5]	*nŏ-vali*

To-mbat etc. equivalent to Kwat, A-mbat, etc.

I am unable to translate the term used for the novice. What is of interest is that used for the guardian or tutor, which is a combination of the personal prefix *to*,[6] *tŏ* or *du*, with the word *bat*, *mbat* or *but*. This word

[1] Deacon uses both terms "guardian" and "tutor." In my own account of initiation I use "tutor."

[2] Harrisson, 2, p. 46.

[3] Deacon, 4, p. 260. The same terminology is used in the rites of the *Ni-mangki Tlel* society which Deacon likens to the Banks Islands *Tamate* societies, with which are associated the *Kwat* societies mentioned below (Deacon, 4, pp. 236 ff.).

[4] Ibid. p. 256. [5] Ibid. p. 250. [6] See p. 208, note 1.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

is identical with the name given to the light-skinned immigrants into South-West and West Malekula who have become the culture-heroes in this district, namely:

Seniang	*A-mbat*
Mewun	*Ka-bat*
Lambumbu	*Ha-mbat*
Laravat	*Ha-mbut*

These are, as has been shown,[1] in turn equivalent to the Banks Islands creator-deity *Kwat*, who is associated with what Deacon refers to as the mat-skirt culture, representing a comparatively late migration into these islands, and now chiefly flourishing in the more northerly islands of Oba, Raga and Maewo.

As already stated, owing to the sound laws governing pronunciation in this part of Melanesia *Kw* is equivalent to *Mb*, the combined sound in the Banks Islands being *Kmbw*, so that the words *Kwat* and *Mbat*, *Bat*, *Pat*, etc. are philologically the same.

Many culture-heroes in the Small Islands are known by names prefixed by the same title *Bat* or *Mbat*, most of whom are said to have been at one time or other turned into stone, indicating their connexion with megalithic culture. One such culture-hero is *Bat-pila*, who was also a stone and whose son sailed from Oba and Raga to the Small Islands bearing hermaphrodite pigs, which they did not, however, leave there but took on to Malo.

The same culture-complex is clearly responsible for the word *Te-bat* or *R-bat* used during a special initiation into the graded society in South Raga for a rite during the course of which a conical mask is made, of which the upper portion represents a hat, and homosexual practices take place.[2] In North Raga the same word *Bweta* (in Rivers's spelling, in Codrington's *Qeta*) is applied to the whole rite of Initiation, which in Oba and Maewo is similarly called *Bwatu* (*Qatu*), and in the Banks Islands *Kwat* (*Q'at*).[3] All these forms of initiation are closely related, and taken together (except in South Raga) include all the elements of North Malekulan initiation excluding the rite of circum-incision itself and the accompanying penis-wrapper and homosexuality. Thus, in the Banks Islands, the enclosure in which the rites are carried out is made with the two ends overlapping to represent a "shark's mouth" and for this reason is called *vale pagoa*.[4] In Oba also those taking part

[1] See p. 209.

[2] Tattevin, 1; 1927, p. 421. *Te-bat*, like the Tamate *Livoa* in the Banks Islands, is one of a series of initiation ceremonies acting as a kind of introduction to the public graded society, and is carried out independently of the ritual of circum-incision.

[3] Codrington, 3, pp. 84-94; Rivers, 1, vol. II, p. 227.

[4] A similar "shark's mouth" entrance is to be found in the stone-wall enclosure of Lodges on Atchin.

L.Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942 0012 Malekula 0012

881 make "hats" in the form of sharks.[1] Both these recall the shark-symbolism in the North Malekulan rites. In Oba a special *ghamal* is made corresponding to the North Malekulan Initiation Lodge, and in both areas the period of seclusion lasts thirty days, during a large part of which the novices remain unwashed and undergo humiliating ordeals, being covered with dung, ashes and other foul stuff. In both areas special noises are made which the novices at first take to be those made by ghosts, but which they subsequently learn to make themselves. These secret noises, apart from the bull-roarer which in Atchin is said to represent the grunting of ghostly pigs,[2] are for the most part connected with hoaxes in which those already initiated, while acting the part of ghosts, at the same time pose as birds softly whistling and flapping their wings. A yet further feature of initiation in North Malekula is that, as will be seen below, in the medicinal treatment of the wound which the *to-mbat* apply the remedies are all called by the name of a bird but the leaves used for making the infusions are called by names indicating various species of fish.[3]

Bird and fish symbolism is of course a well-known feature of the Banks Islands *Tamate* (ghost) societies, with which the *Kwat* society has so much in common that it has in those islands become actually amalgamated with them. Rivers suggests that this type of symbolism as found in these societies has a totemic origin. He points out further that of all the elements now incorporated in the *Tamate* complex the most marked in this respect is the *Kwat*, of which the subsidiary societies are with one exception all called after fish (one of which is the shark (*pagoa*)), turtles or sea-snakes, whence he deduces that this particular society had its origin in a social body containing a number of totemic clans whose totems were marine animals.[4]

This *Kwat* society appears to have been a very mobile affair having, according to Rivers, been introduced comparatively recently into the Banks Islands, and the evidence cited above points fairly conclusively to its being also responsible for the introduction of the later forms of initiation into North Malekula.

With this introduction, I will now turn to a description of Initiation into Manhood on Vao.

[1] In the Banks Islands a shark may be a *tangaroa* (Codrington, 3, p. 187), this word being equivalent to Tangaro applied to the brother of Kwat.

[2] In Semang and Lambumbu it is called the "ear slitter" (Deacon, 4, p. 252).

[3] See p. 513. [4] Rivers, 1, vol. I, p. 113; vol. II, pp. 220, 340.

1: Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

881

CHAPTER XIX

INITIATION INTO MANHOOD ON VAO

AS has already been said, Initiation into Manhood in the Small Islands is, like the Maki rite, intimately bound up with the whole social organisation, being undertaken not by individuals, but by groups corresponding to the "lines" or marriage sections formed of the males belonging to one matrilineal moiety within the framework of the patrilineal village. Thus the social organisation of initiation resembles that of the Maki with the exception that it is not the adults but the younger members of the community who take part.

Six to nine years' interval between rites. Novices' ages vary between 4 and 22.

Owing probably to this and to the passion for display and the enormous expense which the rite entails in the number of pigs sacrificed and feasts given, as well as the necessity to erect a special Initiation House for the novices during their seclusion, it is usual for a period of six to nine years to elapse in any given village between one performance of the rite and the next. This of itself creates a considerable disparity in the ages of the novices initiated at any one time. This disparity is yet further increased by the fact mentioned above that youths of one "line" only are initiated at once, by which reason the actual time elapsing between the rites for which any given novice is eligible is twice that mentioned, namely anything between twelve and eighteen years. Thus, at the initiation rite in which I myself took part on Atchin the youngest novice was about 4 years old and the eldest about 22![1]

This sacrifice of physiological considerations in favour of a communal social organisation and pride of display contributes towards a humorously cynical attitude on the part of the natives towards initiation which tends to place considerably more emphasis on the enjoyment of the initiators at the expense of the novices than might otherwise be the case. Examples

[1] This long interval between initiation rites and the consequent disparity in the ages of the novices is a feature of the introduced *Kwat* society complex and does not occur outside its sphere of influence. Thus in the *Qeta* (*Bueta*) society of North Raga initiation takes place at intervals of six to ten years (Codrington, 3, p. 92). In Ambrim and the greater part of Malekula, however, it takes place about every three years, the age of the novices varying between 8 and 12 (Speiser, 3, p. 203) or 7 and 10 (ibid. p. 288). In South Raga it takes place when the boys are 5 or 6 years old (Tattevin, 1, 1926, p. 401).

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

I witnessed on Atchin may have been an extreme case, but the principle applies throughout the Small Islands and must be borne in mind in the ensuing description of the rites.

TALE OF ORIGIN IN MAINLAND VILLAGE OF N'AV-AV (VERSION GENERALLY CURRENT IN SMALL ISLANDS)

It will be remembered that in the analysis given in the last chapter of the two main forms of initiation rite in Malekula the use of the word *na-avu* for penis-wrapper on Vao appeared to indicate a certain connexion with the earlier form of the rite now practised chiefly in the South, and that in the Small Islands generally, at any rate in Atchin and Vao, the whole rite is said to have originated in a village on the Malekulan mainland bearing the same name N'av-av.[1] The story current on Atchin is as follows:

In the mainland village of N'av-av there were two brothers, of whom the elder was married but the younger not. One day, when the younger brother was in the bush cutting bamboos with which to make a fence, a sharp piece of bamboo sprang back and cut open his foreskin. The cut was so bad that he was unable to bring the two sides together, so that they remained gaping apart. But he managed to stanch the flow of blood, and forthwith applied to his wound all the curative medicines now in use after the operation of incision, and when it had healed he donned for the first time a penis-wrapper, though where this came from is not stated.

One day this youth met his elder brother's wife in the bush and had connexion with her. Never before had she found intercourse so pleasant, so much so that when she next slept with her husband his ministrations no longer pleased her as they used to, and all the time she was with him she could not keep her thoughts off his younger brother "on account of what she had felt." This feeling increased as time went on, till finally she told her husband that since she had known his younger brother his own intercourse had lacked savour. So the husband told one of his friends of this, and begged him to watch the youth and find out what it was that had made his body so pleasant. So the friend concealed himself in the bush and watched while the younger brother took off his wrapper to relieve himself. Then he returned to the husband and told him how his younger brother's foreskin was slit.

The elder then asked the younger how he had done this, and his brother replied by telling how the bamboo had cut him. As a result of this, and of the news of the younger brother's success with women, all the men of the village clamoured for the same thing to be done to them. So a day was appointed for incising all the men of the village, and they

[1] See p. 483.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

made a garden [1] and sacrificed pigs for their mothers' brothers and performed all the rites now associated with initiation.

Then, when all was over, the elder brother went back and resumed intercourse with his wife, after which she said, "Now I feel that your mode of intercourse is good like your brother's," and thenceforth stayed with him.[2]

To-wewe.

In the Vao version of this story it is said that To-wewe, founder of the existing Vao Maki, was the younger brother, and therefore also the introducer of the operation of incision. It is further said that in the days of the old type of pre-Maki rite centering round a single large dolmen practised before the advent of To-wewe,[3] there was no incision. This would appear to indicate a close connexion between incision and the Maki. My informant Pelur, however, explained that, whereas To-wewe had founded the existing Vao Maki of N'av-av while yet a child, it was only later, when he grew up, that he had the accident with the bamboo which gave rise to the operation of incision, the introduction of which thus appears to have been later than that of the Maki.

"First Men" of Initiation

In spite of this local story of origin, however, so many new rites have been purchased from Atchin that the inhabitants of that island are now looked on as the originators of the whole rite, and are called *bot na-mbagho*, "founders (or, as it is expressed in pidgin-English, "first men") of initiation," and it is for this reason that, in whatever Vao village the rite of initiation is performed, the speech announcing the date of the operation must be made by a leading member either of Singon or of Lavame, the two villages which first bought the rite from Atchin.

It is an interesting sidelight on stories of origin and the general question of the diffusion of culture that, though from the point of view of the natives of Vao the "first men" of initiation are the inhabitants of Atchin, for these latter the "first men" are those of Wala, and for the natives of Wala this position was formerly held by the men of the double mainland village of Lawor and Bot-walim, from whom they themselves derived the rite. Thus, each latest village to acquire the rite refers to the last link in the chain before it as the first, though in fact they know that

[1] Initiation proceedings on Atchin open with the planting of a special yam-garden.

[2] It is in complete accordance with native thought, based on a conception of moieties of which one is superior and conservative and the other inferior but progressive, that the younger of two brothers should be the first to introduce any new idea or adopt any new custom.

[3] See p. 283.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

this link in turn is derived from others that have gone before. There is no doubt that Lawor and Bot-walim in turn derived the rite from elsewhere, but the people of the Small Islands do not know from where.

Two Ways of Performing the Rite "The Branching of Initiation"

A further sidelight on the processes of diffusion is the fact that there are on Vao two ways of performing one and the same rite.

These are called respectively:

(*a*) *Bagho homb-homb*, implying the performance on Vao of the complete initiation rite, including all those later additions to the rite which have been bought from Atchin; and

(*b*) *Rang-rang na-mbagho*, "the branching of initiation."[1] This means that whenever the rite of initiation is performed on Atchin it is possible to repeat the essentials on Vao, without going to the great labour and expense involved in the erection of a special Initiation House and the special feasts, dances and elaborate hoaxes which such an erection implies. These having been performed by the so-called "first men" of the rite on Atchin, may thus be "taken as read" on Vao, Atchin being in this sense regarded as a tree whose branches (*rangon*, hence the term *rang-rang*) spread over to Vao, carrying with them the sap and virtue of the Atchin performance.

This is the poor family group's way out, when the burden is too great and the initiation of its members has been too long delayed, and is, in hard times, the more usual procedure, in which all but the most essential features of the rite automatically disappear. Thus, at the time of my visit to Vao, when the men of the Atchin village of Emil-Marur, headed by a man named Mari, had just completed a performance, it had been arranged that a group of Vao men, headed by Mari's mother's brother, named Melteg-sing-gari, should follow on, or, in native terminology, "branch out," with a performance of their own of the type called *rang-rang na-mbagho*. This man, however, had died before the arrangement had been carried through, so the men of his group had decided to wait another year to collect the necessary yams and pigs which would enable them to perform the complete rite called *bagho homb-homb*.

Had Melteg-sing-gari not died, only the simpler form of the rite would have been performed. There would have been no special Lodge, no elaborate hoaxes, no public dancing in the dancing-ground, no great display of food and pigs, nor any beating of the mothers' brothers, such

[1] Compare Rivers, 1, vol. II, p. 87, where, speaking of one group of *Tamate* ("ghost") societies in the Banks Islands, he says, "The chief of these societies is the *Tamate liwos* of which a man must be a member before he can be initiated into the others, called collectively the *wongarai* (or branching) *Tamate*."

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

as will be described below. But now that a complete performance of *bagho homb-homb* had been decided on, preparations were in full swing for the prosecution of all these things.

Such is the superior reputation of Atchin and Wala, however, that they are reported on Vao never to follow on in this way, each group on these islands being committed to the performance of the more elaborate form of the rite. This is, nevertheless, an exaggeration, since even in these islands initiation sometimes "branches," and once a given group on the Superior Side of the Island has performed the complete rite there is a spate of performances following quickly one after the other on the Inferior Side.

Nor is the habit of "branching" confined to the Small Islands, since each of the half-extinct semi-coastal villages of the Malekulan mainland whose culture is allied to that of the Small Islands regularly "branches out" from initiation rites performed either on Wala or Atchin.

This is of course due to the fact that the later forms of the rite have been taken over from Atchin, where the system of hoaxes diffused by way of the Malekulan coastal villages of Lawor and Bot-walim has attained a development far in excess of that practised on Vao, but where the actual operation and the simpler kinds of ordeal are essentially the same. It has been pointed out already that Vao shares with South-West Malekula the earlier form of word for penis-wrapper, namely *na-avu*, which is again associated with the term applied to the early, simpler form of the rite.[1] It would appear probable from this that the Kwat people, landing at Lawor and Bot-walim, as it were drove a wedge of new influence into North Malekula, leaving Vao on one side to carry on with the older form of the rite and to acquire the new forms only by the usual slow methods of ritual purchase through Wala and Atchin. It is therefore of interest to find that the old form of the rite still bears the name *homb-homb*, which would appear to be connected with the word *na-humbe* used for "old man," which in turn is a variant of *Sumbe* and *Supwe*,[2] and so represents a survival from the period before the Maki had supplanted the *Sukwe* in these islands.

Situation on Atchin. Baho tureput and baho n'ôs-ôs.

On Atchin the situation is quite clear, though the old name has disappeared. There each Side of the Island performs a different rite, the older rite, called *baho tureput*, being performed on the Inferior Side, that facing Vao, and the newer, called *baho n'ôs-ôs*, on the Superior Side nearest Wala, whence all new rites on Atchin are derived. Of these, *baho tureput* most nearly resembles the form of rite now practised on Vao, but has, at the same time, already acquired many of the minor rites of *baho n'ôs-ôs*. For in these islands, where through the custom of purchasable copyright rites are commercial assets, no use ever remains pure, but its adherents are

[1] See p. 483. [2] See pp. 220, 693.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012/Malekula 0012

constantly both buying new rites and reselling them to their neighbours, and the process of diffusion is one of continual percolation of marketable rites from one island or village to another. The same process has occurred over the three-mile stretch of water separating Atchin from Vao, so that the acquired rites on Vao, that is to say those which are omitted when "branching out," represent the small ripples lapping a distant shore sent out by a more violent diffusional movement first appearing with great *éclat* some eight generations ago on the Malekulan shore at the two coastal villages of Lawor and Bot-walim, passing first to the now extinct coastal villages, then to the island of Wala, thence to the south-east villages on Atchin, from them still moving to the north-western villages on Atchin, and thence trickling over to Vao, where the new rites are of such recent introduction that there is but little differentiation between the use in the different villages, and the rite may be taken as being approximately uniform throughout the island.

Beating the Mothers' Brothers

One further fact needs mention before we come to the details of initiation on Vao. This is the remarkable custom of beating the novices' mothers' brothers when they come to inspect the boys immediately after the operation.[1] This custom is carried out with extraordinary severity on Atchin, where I have myself witnessed it and where the mothers' brothers are often really severely hurt. It is not done so severely on Vao, which is one of the reasons given for the fact that the initiation rite on Vao is also called "good initiation" (Vao *bagho ru*; Atchin *baho res*), another reason being the absence of other violent features of initiation performed on Atchin such as the seven-day period of stealing to be described in a future volume.

Nevertheless, even on Vao where the mother's brother is held in high respect the custom is observed in a modified form. On enquiring into the reason for this it is necessary to make a brief survey of the position of the mother's brother in the initiation rites of neighbouring peoples. This shows that, though in the New Hebrides generally the geographical distribution of incision coincides with the area of overt patrilineal descent, the right to have the operation performed is everywhere bought from the mother's brother. Moreover, in most parts of the group except in the Small Islands, North Malekula and South Raga, the mother's brother plays an important and often pre-eminent part in the rite. Thus, while in most places the actual operation is performed, as in the Small Islands, by any sufficiently skilled person, in Seniang, according to Deacon, this rôle is taken by the mother's brother.[2] This recalls the practice in the not very distant Polynesian island of Tikopia where in cases of illegitimacy

[1] See p. 508.

[2] Deacon, 4, p. 246.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

the operation performed by the mother's brother appears to be regarded as "a kind of legitimation." [1] In Fiji also the mother's brother takes a leading part in the rite,[2] and, returning to the North Central New Hebrides, in the Sulol district of Ambrim the mother's brother holds the novice during the operation, applies the first dressing, and carries the boy from the reef where the operation is performed to the Lodge where he undergoes his period of seclusion.[3]

Even so far north as Lambumbu in West Malekula the father, though making all arrangements for the operation, and choosing the novice's tutor, is not supposed to have anything to do with his son during the preparatory period, and during the ten-day period of seclusion before the operation itself "the only man that a lad may see besides his guardian is his mother's brother; his father would not think of visiting him, nor even of going near the place of seclusion." [4] In this case, though the mother's brother does not perform the operation, he still acts as a kind of godfather to the boy. It is to be noted that this preparatory period represents that part of the dual rite mentioned on p. 485 which belongs to the older and simpler incision rite before the introduction of the hoaxes and the thirty-day period of seclusion, and the Initiation Lodge is still called by the old term *na-amel na-av-avien*. In South Raga, on the other hand, it is the father who holds the novice during the operation and who subsequently tends his wound.[5]

The conflict between the mother's brother and the father is already well advanced, even in South-West and West Malekula. Thus in Seniang, immediately after the operation and before the payment to the mother's brother, a mock fight takes place between this relative and the father. "Each man gathers his friends about him and they range on opposite sides of the dancing-ground, facing each other. The father and the mother's brother now step forward, each armed with a stick. . . . With these the two men belabour each other, so severely that often blood flows." One of the reasons put forward by the natives for this is that "the uncle is angry with the father for making his nephew's penis sore." Deacon's posthumous editor is unable to explain this, as according to his account it is the mother's brother himself who in this district performs the operation. Internal evidence shows, however, that his notes regarding the initiation rites of various neighbouring tribes have become slightly confused.[6] As a problem concerning the whole district, however, the meaning of the phrase is clear, namely that, owing to the

[1] Rivers, 1, vol. I, p. 311.
[2] Ibid., 2, p. 231, and Rivers, 3.
[3] Ibid., 1, vol. I, p. 292.
[4] Tattevin, 1, 1926, p. 401.
[4] Deacon, 4, p. 251.
[6] For instance, my account (Layard, 2) of initiation in Seniang, the notes of which were among those given to him to copy out before he went to Malekula, have been incorporated in his posthumous book (Deacon, 4) as part of the rites performed in Lambumbu.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
OO12 Malekula OO12

881
604

prevailing patrilineal influence, the father has here usurped the mother's brother's function with regard to the operation. A similar case reported by myself from Seniang but included in Deacon's book under the rites carried out in Lambumbu shows the increasingly inferior position in which the mother's brother finds himself. This is a scene in which, during the payment by all novices to their mothers' brothers after the operation, one particular mother's brother chosen for his qualities as a great fighter, on receiving his pig, stalks fiercely towards the boy and, seizing the spear which the boy holds as symbol of the pig, digs it into the ground so that it bends and breaks. Then he turns to all those assembled and addresses them furiously: "You see how I take this spear, and break it. This shows you my power, that I break this spear and you dare not touch me. Just so, if presently this boy dies through your fault, will I come and kill that man who let him die."[1] This speech incorporated into the ritual of initiation shows clearly the thwarted position in which the mothers' brothers find themselves owing to the control of initiation having passed out of their hands into those of the novices' paternal kin.

It would appear from this that, far from incision being originally a patrilineal institution, as would at first sight seem to be from its geographical distribution,[2] it is in fact a matrilineal trait[3] in which the function of the mother's brother has, in North Malekula and South Raga, been taken over by the boy's patrilineal kin, though the mother's brother continues to exact payment as in all childhood *rites de passage*. In the Small Islands, though excluded from all active share in the boy's initiation, the mother's brother still preserves the right of inspection after the operation, but the fury of the boy's patrilineal kinsmen at the tribute they are still through age-long tradition powerless to withhold vents itself in the severe beating he receives when he does so. This beating is of a type quite different from that meted out to the novices and their tutors, but, like them and unlike the mothers' brothers in Lambumbu, his inferior position is here so completely accepted that he puts up no defence.

The fact that the beating of the boys' mothers' brothers is so much more severe on Atchin than it is on Vao is clearly due to the much greater hold that patrilineal institutions have gained there than on this island. In both islands, however, as in all initiation rites throughout the group, once the whole initiation rite is over, his fundamental connexion with the rite is recognised in the form of shooting expeditions which the novices undertake to their respective mothers' brothers' villages.

Yet another indication of the originally matrilineal character of incision is the tale of origin told at Matanavat on the extreme north coast

[1] See last footnote.
[2] Deacon, 4, pp. 703-5, indeed places it among the patrilineal features.
[3] Since writing this I have found that Rivers also had come to a similar conclusion. See Rivers, 2.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
OO12 Malekula OO12

of Malekula, which retains many early matrilineal features. For, whereas in the Small Islands it is the younger of two brothers who is said to have discovered the operation by accidentally cutting himself with a bamboo,[1] in Matanavat the two persons concerned were a man and his sister who, climbing a bread-fruit tree to cut down the ripe fruit, let fall her bamboo knife so that it accidentally cut the man's foreskin.[2]

With these preliminary explanations, it is now possible to proceed with a description of the rites as they are practised on Vao.

Relation between Novices and their Tutors. Threats of Homosexual Action on the Part of Ghosts

I have already referred to the terminology in use throughout North Malekula and the Small Islands between novices and their tutors. In Vao novices and all those not previously initiated are called *mov ghal*. In contrast to these, all initiated persons are called *to-mbat*, a term which has been fully discussed on pp. 492 ff. Each novice has a special *to-mbat* detailed to look after him, to tell him what he must do, to tend his wound and share his beatings. This man, usually a lodge-brother, I propose to refer to as the novice's tutor. Between these two a special relationship exists, which at first sight would appear to indicate the same homosexual relationship as obtains between novice and tutor among the Big Nambas. Thus, in the ritual terminology of Vao the tutor is said to be "married" (*e lagi ni*) to the novice, who refers to him sometimes as *teme natuk*, one of the terms used by a wife for her husband. Older initiates not acting as tutors are referred to as "unmarried" *to-mbat*.

It was, however, repeatedly denied by the Small Islanders that this terminology implied actual homosexual connexion between tutor and novice, and, being usually lodge-brothers, there is here no possibility of the two belonging to intermarrying kinship sections such as would appear to be indicated by the more specialised terminology in use between men and their boy-lovers among the Big Nambas. Indeed, so far as I could learn, though homosexuality is not unknown in the Small Islands, it is rare, and such relationships as exist almost always consist in a Small Island boy being the passive partner in a temporary union with an adult native from the Malekulan mainland, for which he is rewarded by the present of a money-mat in the same way as men throughout the group make such gifts to their girl-lovers. The Small Islanders' attitude towards such relationships are a comic look and the remark, "What a waste of time when there are so many women." On Atchin, more closely connected with the customs of the Malekulan mainland, the tutor actually addresses his novice as "my wife." Even there, however,

[1] See p. 496. [2] Harrisson, 2, pp. 48-9.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
OO12 Malekula OO12

where I myself had the good fortune to witness most of the rites, I was assured that this terminology did not indicate actual homosexual union, and the same is true of Vao where, though the novice does indeed sometimes speak of his tutor as his "husband," the more usual term used is *to-mbat na-nuk*, "my *to-mbat*," to which the tutor reciprocates by calling the novice *mov ghal na-nuk*, "my novice."

On the other hand, as will be seen below, the novices are being constantly threatened with homosexual attacks by ghosts, and in so far as during the hoaxes the tutors and other initiates often take the part of ghosts they may be said to have at least a spiritual connexion of this nature.

THE RITES

1. PREPARATORY PERIOD: ERECTION OF INITIATION HOUSE

Owing to the large number of pigs, yams, bananas and other produce required for the rite, and to allow time for the building of a special initiation house, it is customary to announce the coming performance a year before the actual operation is expected to take place.

This house, built just behind the Upper Side of the dancing-ground,[1] is called *n'ime na-mbagho*, "Initiation House," in modest contrast to the grander style of "Initiation Lodge" employed on Atchin and in North Malekula,[2] thus marking its closer connexion with the older and simpler form of the rite. Here, after the operation, the novices will sleep for thirty days, have their wounds tended by their tutors, and undergo ordeals and hoaxes. Here also, after the thirty days are over, they will continue to sleep till opportunity arises for them to undertake the overseas voyage for the purpose of Initiation into Sex.

Novices and Tutors are beaten.

The whole preliminary period is occupied with the assembly of materials for, and the construction of, the initiation house. This provides opportunity for numerous pleasantly exciting journeys to the mainland, whence most of the materials are fetched.

Now also occurs the first foretaste of the trials of initiation in that on every such occasion, both when the materials are landed on the beach and when later they are transported to the dancing-ground, not only the novices but also their tutors are beaten with sticks by the older initiates. These beatings henceforth become a feature of each and every act connected with initiation during the preparatory period before the actual operation. Whether this be the landing on the beach of bamboo rafters

[1] See Map IV.

[2] In these places the words for Initiation Lodge are:
Atchin *lol-hamal*.
Big Nambas *na-ghamal bagho*.
Lambumbu *na-amel na-w-avien* or *na-mur-mur*.
All these contain variants of the word *ghamal* as opposed to the Vao *n'ime*, "house."

1: Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

881
346

brought from the mainland, or the cutting and transporting of logs for centre-posts and ridge-pole, or the bringing of palm leaves for thatching, on all these and hundreds of other occasions both novices and tutors are beaten.

As each major object for the construction of the initiation house is landed or brought up from the beach to be deposited in the dancing-ground, the novices with their tutors dance and sing songs belonging to the processional song-and-dance cycle called *Na-rel*, and when the elder "unmarried" initiates hear the procession approaching they flock down to the beach and line the road, to beat them. The attitude of the tutors is a mixture of severity, insisting on the due performance of the rite, and of kindly humour towards the novices who are at the same time in most cases their own classificatory younger brothers. Though it is true that the tutors are beaten too, their beating is as a rule not so severe as that of the novices, and, in any case, they are older and better able to bear it. This mixture of intimacy and hoaxing is well seen in the constant appeals made by the novices, who beg "Don't let's make so much noise. If only we didn't sing all the time they wouldn't know, and wouldn't come to beat us." But the tutors, remembering their own past sufferings and being in no mind to spare the younger generation, sing on, and attract the blows not only on the novices, but also on themselves.

Once this indignity is over, however, and the materials duly deposited in the dancing-ground, the occasion assumes the aspect of any ordinary rite. A pig is killed, message-yams are sent to all the other dancing-grounds on Vao with the announcement that this part of the rite has been duly performed, and the gong-signal most closely associated with initiation, called *na-mbe ne-ôs-ôs*,[1] is sounded.

When all the materials have been collected the initiation house is finally erected. This takes several days, with long intervals between them. The same beatings and ritual are performed, but on a grander scale, and on each occasion when the work is finished the novices and their tutors feast off puddings made by the novices' mothers.[2]

[1] Compare this with the name given to the whole rite on the Superior Side of Atchin, namely *baho n'ôs-ôs* (p. 499), and see possible explanation of the word given on p. 312.

[2] On Atchin, at every stage in the erection of the Initiation Lodge, a temporary hut is made to represent the Lodge, in which the leading initiate sits. Each novice, accompanied by his tutor, is then made to approach down a specially constructed leafy way to the door of the hut, at the entrance to which they are both beaten by "unmarried" initiates standing on either side. Inside, the leading man addresses the candidate, telling him that he has hitherto been only a woman, but will now soon become a man, and purposely confuses him by presenting him with a mock imitation of the centre-post or ridge-pole, or whatever object is about to be erected, which the novice has to attempt to manipulate while at the same time being prevented from so doing by some trick—a foretaste of the more serious hoaxes after the operation. No mention was made of this in the account of the Vao rite, and it may be one of the many additional refinements that have not yet reached this island.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

Now also, in addition to songs of the *Na-rel* song-and-dance cycle, yet others are sung belonging to the cycle called *Le-tean*, of which the following, sung very slowly, is a good example:

SONG 7. LE-TEAN (bought from Atchin)

This is an Atchin song, bought from that island, and the words are neither in the Atchin nor in the Vao language, but are a mixture of the poetic diction ordinarily used in songs, and Atchin words mispronounced in the usual Vao manner. They appear to mean "Dance upward, upward, let us go to a high place; Our yams at Togh-vanu, the first place, we distribute to all places." The words of the corresponding Atchin song belonging to the *Kulen* cycle on that island, sung on a similar occasion, run: "*Leng mare mare re ulol weno o; ni-rom semam o Me-le Mparav ba womu o re le les wenu o.*" Allowing for changes in pronunciation, the words are the same except for the fact that the Atchin word *leng*, recalling the *na-leng* maze-dances, has been replaced by the Vao word *vel*, the ordinary word for "dance," and the name of the Vao village of Togh-vanu (note the poetic *To-go-va-nu* to fit in with the rhythm) replaces that of the Atchin village of Emil Parav (note again the poetic *Me-le Mparav*). The name of the village alters, of course, with each village in which the song is sung, and it is an interesting example of the boasting ethos of Malekula that in each case the village in which the song is sung is designated "the first place"! The tune has also lost distinction in transit, being distinctly less impressive than the Atchin version.[1]

The songs belonging to this cycle differ in character from those of most Small Island song-cycles in that they are sung very slowly and with much conscious dignity, within the house-enclosure (later inside the house itself), and to a slow measured walking tread. This one is also remarkable in that it is one of the few Small Island songs which fit into common (4) time.

Villages in succession dance Banana-Leaves. Operation announced to take place on seventh day after the last dance.

When the construction of the initiation house is finished, members of all the Vao villages arrive in turn, at intervals of a few days, to perform the *Banana-Leaves* dance.

[1] See future volume.

1: Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

881 ● 535

The dance, which begins at sundown, usually lasts well into the night, and is illuminated with the light of torches (*rehere*) borne by the novices, who dance with them in two ranks, one before and one behind the main body of dancers, the tutors dancing empty-handed with the guests.

881

Each village comes to dance in its prescribed turn. When the rite is being held in Togh-vanu (the village which my informant had in mind when giving this account), the last village to dance is Singon, and it is on this occasion that the leading member of Singon, or, alternatively, of Lavame, exercises his privilege of announcing the date of the operation, these villages having been the first to purchase the new form of the rite from Atchin.

There is, however, no choice of date, which must, by tradition, be fixed for the seventh day after the last dance by the last visiting village.

The intervening seven days are spent busily by the novices collecting yams, bananas and other vegetables with which to make puddings for their tutors, and in bargaining for fowls and snaring flying foxes to cook in them.

The puddings thus made are large ones, taking the whole night to cook. They are placed in the ovens on the Eve of the day fixed for the operation.

2. DAY OF THE OPERATION

In the morning the puddings prepared by the novices are taken out of the ovens and given to the tutors to eat, in return for which the tutors present the novices with money-mats (*mangau*) or pigs.

Novices pay their mothers' brothers with pigs provided by the novices' fathers. Tutors and novices race down to the beach.

The pigs to be paid by the novices to their mothers' brothers are then tied to stakes planted in the dancing-ground by the novices' fathers, who also supply the pigs. When these are ready, the gong-signal called *na-mbe ñil-dralen* is sounded, to the accompaniment of which the novices and their tutors dance in a serpentine course round and in and out among the pigs.

With the now imminent approach of the operation, the excitement is intense. At the arrival at last of the great moment, pride and the joy of the dance mingle to create an atmosphere of exaltation which does much to allay the apprehension of physical pain. All are now filled with one idea, the speedy consummation of the rite. As the dance comes to an end, in great haste and apparent confusion each novice unties his pig and presents it to his mother's brother in payment for the rite. Then each tutor takes his novice by the hand, and together they all race down to the beach at Kowu, where the operation is to be performed.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942.
0012 Malekula 0012

881
304

Operation performed on the shore. Preliminary hoax. Novices' wounds washed by their fathers in the sea.

Any skilled man may perform the operation, an act called *a lohure*. If on any specified occasion there are many such experts, the novices belonging to each Lodge go to their own special places on the beach. If, on the other hand, there are only one or two, all go to the same place.[2] Here each novice in turn is made to stand up against a tree, to which his tutor clasps him while at the same time blindfolding him by means of a money-mat (the same as will later be presented to the operator as his fee) held over his eyes. Then tutor and operator both address him, telling him not to shake or flinch, but to bear the operation bravely.

The operation, called *bagho*, and for which the verb is *baghoi*, is performed by inserting a hardwood stick between the foreskin [1] and the upper side of the glans penis,[2] and cutting on to this with a bamboo knife, the result being that the foreskin, while still attached to the corona, hangs down exposing the glans. The operation is similar to that performed on Atchin and in all the neighbouring islands, and a more detailed description of it, together with the personal reactions of the novices, will appear in my forthcoming work on that island, where I was fortunate enough to witness it. On Vao the bamboo knife is called *tele*, and the hardwood stick inserted into the foreskin *memen ne tele*, "the knife's tongue," a term which, in the opinion of the Atchin folk, is insipid and uninspiring in comparison with their own term "shark's tongue," referring to the swallowing monster.[3]

As soon as the operation is over, the tutor removes the money-mat from the novice's eyes, and drops it on the ground as payment for the operator. As soon as it has been removed and the novice has sufficiently recovered his wits to see, the tutor addresses him, using the kind of symbolical language associated with initiation, and saying "Look down. See, your *ghavigo* ('malay apple') is red."

The novice looks down, and is then made, apparently unaided, to walk down to the sea, where his father now takes charge of him, and, making him sit down at the water's edge, washes his wound in the salt water,[4] his tutor being now free to walk about and watch the operations on the other novices.

Mothers' brothers arrive dancing Na-rel, inspect the novices and are beaten.

881

When all the operations are finished, and the novices are ranged in a row at the waterside having their wounds washed, the noise of singing

[1] Called *tember* (or *wul na kalon*, literally "skin of the penis").
[2] Called *wohin*. Compare *wohoi*, "to plug up a hole" (see p. 467).
[3] See pp. 485-6.
[4] All wounds, of whatever nature, are washed whenever possible in salt water, which is known to have healing properties.

[752]

I:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

is heard, and on to the scene bursts a procession consisting of all the mothers' brothers of the novices, together with other male relatives on the mother's side, dancing and singing songs belonging to the *Na-rel* cycle. Arrived at the spot where the novices are sitting, each mother's brother bends down to splash some water over his sister's son's wound, and, as he does so, is beaten by the boy's patrilineal kinsmen. This is the only occasion on which, to my knowledge, mothers' brothers are beaten during the initiation rite on Vao, a great contrast to Atchin procedure, and one giving rise to the term "good initiation" already mentioned [1] by which the Vao rite is known.

Novices eat red yam, symbolic of blood, and are then hoaxed into believing that a triangular piece of foreskin has been removed.

While still having their wounds washed, the novices are given to eat a species of red yam, here called by the special term *ühüngerē*, symbolic of blood. This being only a symbolic act, and the taste of this yam being far from good, each novice takes only a bite of it, and then throws the rest into the sea. This being done, he is then given as much good roast white yam as he cares to eat, but it is not till the fifth day that he is allowed the pleasure of eating puddings.

At the same time, in consonance with the dual attitude on the part of the elders of mental bullying alternating with care, the ground is laid for a hoax practised seven days later, by persuading the novice that the gap in his foreskin caused by the incision has been made by the actual removal of a triangular piece of skin, an imitation of which he will then, to his horror, be expected to eat.[2]

First medicinal treatment.

When the blood from the wound of each individual novice has ceased flowing, he is conducted a little way up the beach to a spot where his tutor administers the first of a series of medicinal treatments. In this treatment the curative element is the juice obtained by heating a species of seaweed called *mēlavū* over a fire.[3] In the application of this each tutor is assisted by another,[4] who places his hand over the glans penis to protect it, while the boy's tutor squeezes the juice over the wound. After this, the wound is gently stroked with leaves of a kind called *nā-mbor* similarly heated over a fire and then folded, so as to clean the wound and remove

[1] See p. 500. [2] See p. 518.

[3] It is to be noted that most seaweeds contain iodine and other mineral salts which are both antiseptic and astringent.

[4] In Atchin each tutor, who is addressed by the novice as "husband," has one or more assistants called "lovers," and it is one of these who assists on such occasions, and performs all the more menial duties allocated to the "husband." I do not know whether the same holds of Vao, or whether the assistant in this case is simply another patrilineal relative or the tutor of another novice.

1: Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

any clots of blood that may remain.[1] The penis is then wrapped in a dressing of soft leaves of a kind called *ro vile-vile*, over which is then wound the usual boy's penis-wrapper made of the split half of a banana leaf, called *nu-mba-nu-mbe*.[2]

Novices enter initiation house.

After this application, each novice lies down on the beach to await the ceremonial procession into the initiation house.

When all are ready, and have rested a little, all the men of the village join in a procession from the beach inland to the dancing-ground, dancing and singing songs of the *Na-rel* cycle. The tutors dance among the rest, each with his novice beside him. The novices, however, hardly feel like dancing, and walk as best they can, each carrying a club of a kind called *wura*[3] over his left shoulder, while in his right hand he holds a twig cut from the hardwood tree called *tor-tore*, which he moves up and down as if it were an adze. This twig is called by the same name *tele*[4] as the knife with which he was incised, symbolical of the operation he has just suffered.

So the procession, some singing and dancing, while the novices bemusedly wave their mock adzes, makes its way up the path into the dancing-ground. As they enter the ground a single pig is sacrificed and the gongs strike up the rhythm called *na-mbe ne-ôs-ôs*, to the accompaniment of which they process to the further end. Then the singing ceases, and, to the accompaniment of a fresh rhythm, called *na-mbe ril-dralen*, the procession turns, and moves silently in the serpentine course called *gha wire-vire* back over the ground till, finally, they leave it and enter into the special house built for the novices on the high ground behind the Upper Side.

3. THIRTY DAYS' SECLUSION

Must not be seen too close by women.

Here, and in the surrounding enclosure, they remain for thirty days, accomplishing their *rite de passage* into manhood, corresponding to the similar thirty-day period elapsing between physical birth and the child's first presentation to the world.[5] On Atchin, during the corresponding thirty-day period, the novices may not on any account be seen by women.

[1] This treatment also indicates considerable medical knowledge, whether conscious or no, it being generally accepted in European surgery that the presence of a blood clot predisposes both to infection and to the formation of redundant scar tissue.

[2] Informal penis-wrappers made in this way are adopted without ceremony by boys who are about to attain puberty but have not yet been initiated. The word *nu-mba-nu-mbe* is a reduplication of a form of the word *na-mbwes* used on Atchin for the plaited penis-wrapper worn by adults, for which the Vao term is *na-apu*.

[3] Possibly the same as the Atchin *n'ei e ves*.

[4] More usually used for a shell adze.

[5] See p. 179, also the thirty-day period of retreat after the Maki (pp. 394, 402).

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
OO12 Malekula OO12

On Vao, however, this form of restriction is laxer, since women may see them, but only at a distance, and may not speak to them. Here also, however, as at Atchin, this prohibition does not take effect from the time of the operation, since women line the route by which they process from beach to dancing-ground, but comes into force only after their entrance into the initiation house, an interesting indication of the convergence of two originally separate rites, already referred to.[1]

The first hoax. Tutors say they are going to fetch fine mats, but in fact strew white ashes on floor.

But even now the novices are allowed no rest. The moment they are in the house, the hoaxes begin. The novices are at first led to believe that they are to be treated magnificently and made comfortable beyond their dreams, and when their tutors say "Now we'll go and get new *tapa* mats (*ta-mbagha mbar*) for you," they feel their dreams are about to come true. But the tutors return with nothing better than baskets full of white ashes, which they spread on the floor for the novices to sleep on, without mat or pillow of any kind. As in all things connected with initiation, these ashes serve a dual purpose, on the one hand acting as a disinfectant,[2] continually finding their way, despite the penis-wrappers and the soft dressing of *ro vile-vile* leaves beneath, to sting and cauterise the wound, and on the other providing the means towards a practical joke on the poor novices.

Initiates dance and sing all night in initiation house.

Even could they sleep under these conditions, they may not for the noise. For all night long, for the first five nights of their sojourn, the tutors and other initiates dance up and down the centre of the house singing songs of the *Tughunuan* and *Le-tean* cycles, kicking up dust mixed with white ashes over the prostrate novices.

This all-night dancing continues, depriving the novices of sleep, for the five days that constitute the intensive period of the rite.

Le-tean song (corresponding to Atchin Kulen).

Of these songs, those belonging to the *Le-tean* cycle, corresponding to the Atchin *Kulen*, are panegyrics about those who have performed the Maki rite and taken Maki titles.

Tughunuan song.

Songs belonging to the *Tughunuan* cycle are of a very different character, approximating more closely to children's songs, being for the most part about birds or fruit, and to each of these some sort of hoax is attached.

[1] See p. 485.
[2] Against organisms, such as tetanus, already present in the earth. See also p. 259.

1: Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
OO12 Malekula OO12

881 One of these is of a man clearing a place in which to make a garden, and runs:

533

SONG 8. TUGHUNUAN

ten
rur te - - te ne-gha . . . . a o, ne hagh o ve - ve hia (m);
We cut down branches . . . . . I have climbed tired (hummed)
rur te te-ghe ne-moh o, tur go la-tan sur-ia o,
We cut branches in the bush, remain on the ground, leave off,
re sum - bol re re mul o; ne hagh o ve - ve hia (m).*
let us climb down, let us return; I have climbed tired. (hummed)

"We cut down branches from the trees,
I have climbed up (so many times that) I am tired;
We cut down branches in the bush,
Let us stay on the ground, and leave off work,
Let us climb down, and go home;
I have climbed up (so many times that) I am tired."

I did not record the hoax accompanying this song.

881 *Hoaxes. Threats of homosexual activities of ghosts.*

During the first five days of the novices' confinement in the initiation house, no moment is free from the fear that some hoax or other may be played on them. While the hoaxes practised on Vao cannot compare, in number and severity, with those practised on Atchin which continue throughout the whole thirty days and a full account of which will be given in a subsequent volume, their general tone is not dissimilar, being based on terrorising the novices and, in particular, frightening them with the alleged homosexual appetites of ghosts.

Novices attacked by initiates disguised as ghosts.

A recurring theme is for the initiates to divide themselves into two parties, one outside the house and one within. Those inside, including the tutors, dance and sing songs of the *Tughunuan* cycle, lulling the suspicions of the weary novices by every means within their power, when,

* Atchin spoken equivalents: *te-te=tei; ne-gha=ne-hi; hagh=sa; ne-moh=la-māsh; sumbol=tupul.*

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
OO12 Malekula OO12

suddenly, in burst the others, disguised with paint to represent the ghosts of old men (*ta-mat mōt*). Those within, feigning terror as great as that with which they wish to inspire the novices, emit frightened cries; shuffle and cower like birds, and, finally, simulating regained courage, line up in front of their now startled and trembling wards, holding long bamboos horizontally before them as a kind of protecting fence, against which the alleged ghosts hurl themselves in their effort to get at the boys. It has already been seen to by the tutors that the novices are well aware of the awful fact that any one of them whom one of the ghosts succeeds in striking will some day be killed in battle. They are, however, powerless to move, being hemmed in between the sloping roof and the line of protecting tutors. Sometimes matters are so arranged that the tutors win, and the ghosts retire in discomfort. Sometimes, however, one of the ghosts will break through and strike a novice, to his dismay. Then the ghostly party utters ghoulish cries: "*Hui! . . . hui! . . . hui! . . . ?.*" [1]

Medicinal Treatment by Means of Infusions and Steaming

Administered by the tutors; assisted on the first three days successively by initiates from all villages on the island.

During the ensuing five days the novices' wounds are treated by means of infusions and steaming, the administration of which is a semi-public act affording an opportunity for initiates from all villages on the island to view the progress of the novices. Thus, when the rite of initiation is being performed in Pete-hul, boys' tutors are assisted in the application of the remedies by initiates from this village and from Tolamp; on the second day by initiates from Pete-hul's twin-village, Togh-vanu; and on the third day by initiates from villages on the other Side of the Island in the usual order.[2] On the fourth and fifth days the treatment is continued by the novices' own tutors only.

Mock names for remedies.

In accordance with the mock language used in initiation, these remedies are all called by the name of a bird, *na-wagh*, but the leaves from which they are made are called by the names of fish, thus:

	Name of the Leaf used to make the Infusion	Name of the Fish by which the Leaf and Remedy are called
1st remedy	*rōmbi*	*mov-ghat*
2nd remedy	*rombon na-nah*	*hulup*
3rd remedy	*bor-mbaru*	*dirav*

[1] This form of cry is called *ra hūrēi tōgh-wōwū*. Though no overt mention of homosexual acts was made in this account, the connexion of such with sudden death in battle is clearly seen in the final hoax perpetrated on the 107th Day (see p. 519).

[2] See p. 300.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
OO12 Malekula OO12

Mode of application.

In all cases the method of administration is the same. The leaves, all of which must be of one of the three kinds mentioned, are broken up and placed in a basin made out of a number of umbrella-palm leaves, into which water is also poured and a red-hot stone put in to heat it. The leafy basin is then folded up for a short time, during which the water draws out the juices from the leaves. In folding up the basin the leaves forming it are so manipulated that a kind of spout is left, by means of which the infusion is then poured over the wound, after which the packet is opened and placed beneath the wound so that the steam rising from it shall continue to play around and soothe it.[1] As each packet is opened, the tutor addresses the novice and, pointing at the leaf from which the infusion has been made, says, "You see this leaf. You used to call it (e.g.) *rŏmbi*. Well, its real name is *mov-ghat* (the name of a fish). Now you know." The novice dutifully repeats the mock name, and duly pays for the esoteric knowledge with the customary fee of a plaited belt or other small object.

For three days the novices may not drink, nor for four days may they eat puddings.

For the first three days after the operation the novices may not drink water, since the passing of water is both painful and necessitates the too frequent removal of the dressings; nor may they for four days eat puddings, which are considered too rich, but are fed chiefly on roast white yams.[2]

The prohibition against drinking water may also have a ritual significance. It is specifically mentioned in connexion with initiation in all districts, and a similar prohibition is a feature of ritual abstinence on many other occasions, as in gong-making.[3]

To what extent the restrictions on food also, eminently sound as they appear from our point of view, can be said to be based on medical grounds is doubtful, since their application is in all cases ritualised, and as such is regarded by the natives as part of the system of ordeals that the novices have to endure. Thus ritual demands that the restrictions begin and end for all novices at once, irrespective of their individual physical condition.

The raising of the restrictions follows the usual initiatory pattern in that (*a*) a farcical homily is addressed to the novice and (*b*) the novice must pay.

Third Day

Removal of restriction on drinking water. Mock name for water.

The ban on the drinking of water is brought to a close on the evening of the third day, when one of the initiates brings a bambooful of water

[1] Equivalent to a hot fomentation, producing hyperaemia.
[2] The word for roasting is *tun-tun* (Atchin *tu-tun*).
[3] See p. 355.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
OO12 Malekula OO12

and props it up close to the door of the special house. Each novice, with his tutor, is then called out in turn by the leading man, who addresses the novice, saying, "You see this. Up till today you have always called this *nu-we* (the ordinary word for fresh water). This isn't its real name. Its real name is *ne-lum*." This word *lum* is really an adjective meaning "cool," here elevated to the status of a mock secret word. The novice, having learnt that it is better to accept the insult than to risk the displeasure of the initiates, dutifully repeats the word *ne-lum*, pays his fee to the leading man, both for the esoteric knowledge and for the water, and forthwith drinks. The fee consists of some small object such as a plaited belt, or, latterly, a stick of tobacco. The verb describing this and other payments made on similar occasions is *gu-ghugh*.

Fifth Day

Novices run the gauntlet called "Catching rails."

The ban on eating pudding is similarly lifted on the fifth day, but before this a special hoax is performed called *ghore pilagh*, "catching rails." Rails are the long-legged wading birds after which the dance called *Pilagh* is named, a dance performed chiefly by women in connexion with mortuary rites.[1] "Catching rails" is a ritual sport corresponding to that which in Atchin is called *hor-hor mara*, "catching eels," which in that island occurs frequently in mythological tales and is actually performed during initiation, when certain of those previously initiated divide into two parties and ritually "catch eels" all round the island till they converge at the spot on the beach where the novices are awaiting inspection by their mothers' brothers on the day after the operation. The "eels" are represented by long rolls of leaves plucked just before unfolding and dangled from strings attached to bamboo poles which those taking part in the performance from time to time close in on and spear.

Just how "catching rails" is done on Vao I do not know, though the main features of it appear to be the same. The hoax consists in a combination of this motive with what we should regard as the antiseptic measure of sterilising the wound with white ashes, all carried out in the humorously bullying atmosphere that obtains throughout the initiation rites. The initiates form up in two lines in the enclosure outside the house, and the novices, having been told they are going to chase rails, are brought out of the house and made, without penis-wrappers, to run the gauntlet between the two lines of initiates, who, as they run, throw white ashes on to their wounds. The stronger and braver novices run

[1] See p. 323.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

quickly through, and, of course, suffer the least; the weaker collapse with the pain and, forgetting to advance, remain weeping till forced on. Though I did not witness any hoaxes on Vao, it is necessary to correct the first impression of sheer gruesomeness in this hoax by referring to a similar performance I witnessed on Atchin, one of many to be described in my forthcoming work on that island. It is impossible to understand the atmosphere of these hoaxes without reference to the psychology of the initiates, in whom a strong dose of pity was mixed even with the atmosphere of bullying excitement and intrigue preceding the hoax, resulting in the fact that the moment the hoax was over all bullying immediately ceased, and the initiates were full of sympathy and comfort for the very boys that they were gruelling a minute before. The novices, of course, know that this will be the case, and it is this ambivalent attitude on the part of the initiates which changes what to us would appear unmitigated bullying into a ritual act appreciated by the novices in retrospect, almost as much as it undoubtedly is by the initiates themselves.

Removal of restriction on eating pudding. Mock name for pudding. Novices are allowed to wash for the first time.

Nevertheless, the novices can hardly be said to enjoy it at the time, and it is accordingly this moment that is chosen for the first real sign of return to normal creature comforts by the lifting of the ban against eating pudding. Even now, however, the atmosphere of mock-esoteric learning combined with the ever-present motive of humiliating the novices is carried on in that, before eating, the wretched boys are made to say that the real name of the pudding is in fact *rombet-rombet*, the name of a particularly unpleasant kind of grass. Not till each novice has been told this and has duly repeated it is he allowed to eat. Even now, since the puddings are considered too rich, and partly in order to bait him, he is only allowed a tiny scrap, though on all subsequent evenings he is allowed to eat as much as he likes, and is, in fact, fed with the best of everything that can be obtained.

Now also, for the first time, he is allowed to wash, in water brought by his father.

End of all-night dancing inside the house. Novices made comfortable with mats.

That night, for the first time since the operation, there is no dancing in the house, and the novices are really brought the fine *ta-mbagha* mats to lie on that they had been promised the first night, but for which white ashes had been substituted, and they are installed in comfort. Though the hoaxing atmosphere continues throughout their thirty days' seclusion, the painful aspect of them ceases, and the rest of their time spent there is on the whole a pleasant one.

1: Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

Sixth Day

Novices bathe for first time in sea, after being hoaxed with the threat of a second operation.

The hoax called "Catching rails," the first eating of pudding, the first washing and the cessation of all-night dancing on the fifth night mark the end, not only of the period of the novice's most intensive trials, but also of the more rigorous aspects of his seclusion. For on the sixth day the novices are taken out of the house and led by their tutors down to the sea to bathe. This act is called *sumbulan va ru*, "going down for the second time," this too being made the occasion for a minor hoax, the wretched novices being led to believe that they are about to undergo a second operation. For at a certain spot on the road down to the shore a single initiate is stationed, bearing in his hand a bamboo knife smeared with the juice of a red fruit called *rori*, representing blood. As the first novice, accompanied by his tutor, comes up to him, this man catches hold of him, saying, "Come on. I'm going to slit the other side of your foreskin now." The poor novice is dismayed and with piteous protests tries to escape. But his fear does not last long, for, after enjoying his fright for a little while, the tutor laughs and says, "It's all right, he's not going to do anything. He's only making fun of you." But the first novice is now used as fresh witness to the truth of the threat, for he is then made to shout out to the next novice behind him telling him that they are all going to have the other side of their foreskins cut. Each novice in turn is thus momentarily terrorised. But it is soon over, and they are all then led down to the sea to bathe.

A new remedy administered, first by the tutors and on subsequent occasions by the novices themselves.

This bathing, besides being a ritual act as well as a pleasant release for the novices, is also made use of for the application of a new remedy, the tutors rubbing the young shoots of plants called *vūnu* and *ro-rori* (the same as that the red juice of which the initiate has just been using to represent blood) between their hands and dipping them in the sea-water until they are soft, and then smearing the juice extracted from them on the novices' wounds. These leaves, and the cure they represent, are called by the mock-esoteric name *nu mbar* "ripe (i.e. dry) coconut," which the novice must learn before paying his fee. This is the last cure to be administered by the tutors. From now on the novices are allowed to bathe whenever they like, and each henceforth, when bathing, administers the same cure upon himself till the wound is quite healed.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
OO12 Malekula OO12

Seventh Day

Novices are hoaxed by being made to eat puddings in which the alleged triangular piece cut out of their foreskin is said to be cooked.

On the seventh day the evening meal is itself made the subject of a hoax. It will be remembered how, at the time of the operation, the novices were given to understand that the gap formed by the slit in the foreskin was caused by the removal of a triangular piece of skin. The seeds of fear thus sown are now made to bear fruit, the novices being told that this evening they are to eat a pudding called *na-longk ong rehi kalor*, "pudding with foreskins in it." And, in fact, when the puddings are cut, lo and behold they are seen to contain dull reddish triangular objects looking for all the world like bruised skin, made by the initiates out of red *hakaul* flowers. The novices are duly horrified. Those who are brave enough, or intelligent enough, to suspect that this is but another hoax, make up their minds to eat the pudding. But the first rigorous days being now over, even those who are deceived and squeamish suffer no worse fate than their own continued fearfulness, and are allowed to give their pudding to be eaten by one of those who do not mind, on payment of a money-mat to the eater.

Novices remain in mild seclusion for remainder of the thirty days.

From now on, the lot of the novices is an almost wholly pleasant one, well substantiating the Atchin designation of this type of initiation as "good." They may bathe when they like, being only restricted by the necessity of avoiding women, and even in this respect the onus of avoidance lies largely with the latter. They are well fed, and such hoaxes as are still practised on them are, unlike the Atchin hoaxes, comparatively mild and amusing. At the same time, they are taught how to make certain esoteric noises such as those which will be described in my account of initiation on Atchin, but of which I did not collect the details on Vao.

4. THIRTIETH DAY AND AFTER

Exit from initiation house. Tutors rewarded. Novices don new penis-wrappers and practise shooting with bows and arrows at home and in their mothers' villages.

So occupied, they continue their seclusion for thirty days. On the thirtieth day they make their formal exit from the initiation house, and, in view of guests assembled in the dancing-ground from all the villages on the island, publicly reward their tutors with tusked boars provided by their fathers, and are provided with new penis-wrappers plaited by their mothers.[1] Judging by procedure on Atchin, there is probably dancing, but I did not record of what type. Then the novices proceed to practise

[1] This, for some, is a purely ritual act, since, owing to the disparity in the ages of the novices, many have worn them, unofficially, before initiation.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

shooting with bows and arrows, first at the trees surrounding the dancing-ground, and then all over the territory of their home-village.

During the next few days all the new initiates together proceed on shooting expeditions to each village in which the mother of any one of them was born. A whole day is thus given up to each village in turn, till all have been visited, the boys roaming at will around the village territory, shooting at trees, and the whole band being entertained with food by the mother's brother of the boy whose maternal village they are honouring.

Avoidance of women gradually relaxed. Novices sleep in initiation house till opportunity arises for Initiation into Sex.

While being thus free, however, the aura of seclusion still hangs around them, and for a short indeterminate period they may not speak to women unless first spoken to, this period being characterised by an avoidance of all female companionship, particularly that of a boy's own mothers and sisters,[1] whom he is not permitted to address till he has himself been first spoken to by an old woman of another village.

Initiation, while thus weaning a boy from the influence of his female relatives and introducing him into manhood, symbolised by the prominent part played by shooting with bows and arrows, and though sexual in that it includes incision and the constant threat of homosexual action on the part of ghosts, does not, however, constitute an introduction to hetero-sexual life. This is reserved for a later occasion, namely the special rite of sex initiation which is performed not on the island of Vao, nor on the mainland of Malekula, but which forms part of a youth's first overseas expedition to Oba or some other island in the matrilineal area described in the next chapter. No uninitiated boy can take part in any such expedition, nor, once initiated, may he cease sleeping in the initiation house till the opportunity arises for him to join one. Only after such a sex-initiatory expedition has taken place may he return to sleep in his paternal compound.

Hundred-and-Seventh Day

Hoax regarding homosexual intercourse with ghosts of the slain.

I did not record any rite held on the hundredth day, such as occurs elsewhere. This may be a case of omission. However this may be, the non-heterosexual character of manhood-initiation receives its final expression in the last rite connected with it, which takes place on the hundred-and-seventh night (*na-mbong mow hangawul raman ghe-mbüt*) after the operation, when an "unmarried" initiate climbs up inside the house to the apex of the roof, calling out to all those who have died a violent death (*ta-mat-oamp*) to come and have homosexual intercourse with the new initiates.

[1] These words being used, of course, in a classificatory sense.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

881

Date	Event	Hoaxes	Song-and-Dance (Gong-rhythm)	Functions of Relatives
Preparatory period	Construction of initiation house		*No-tal* (*no-ka-ka*) *La-tsam*	
	Dancing by Vao villages in rotation		*Rii-mbulat* (Banana-Leaves)	
Date of initiation fixed for 7 days ahead				
Day of operation	Novices pay pigs to MB Operation performed on shore Wound dressed Entrance into initiation house	Incised penis likened to malay apple Novices given red yam to eat Novices made to lie on white ashes instead of fine mats	*No-tal* (*no-ka-ka*) *vire-vire* (*rii-dralen*)	MB receives payment pigs supplied by F MB besten F washes wound
First 5 days after operation	Wound treated by means of infusions Prohibition against drinking water and eating puddings	Mock names given to infusions (bird and fish symboliam) Initiates play part of ghosts attempting homosexual intercourse with novices	*Tughumaan* *La-tsam*	
3rd day	Prohibition against drinking water removed			
5th day	Prohibition against eating puddings removed Novices wash for first time, and are given fine mats to lie on	"Catching rails" Novices run gauntlet White ashes thrown on wound		M makes puddings F brings water for washing
6th day	Novices bathe in sea New treatment for wound	Novices tricked into believing they are about to undergo a second operation		
7th day		Novices offered pudding containing objects said to be apparently missing part of their own foreskins		
8th to 30th days	Novices live easy lives, are well fed and may bathe if not seen by women Novices learn secret noises	No more serious hoaxes		
30th day	End of seclusion Novices pay tutors, don penis-wrappers and practise shooting with bows and arrows		?	F provides boars for payment of tutors M makes penis-wrapper
After 30th day	Novices visit their mothers' brothers' villages and practise shooting there They continue to sleep in initiation house till Pilgrimage to Obe for special initiation into sex They may be seen by, but must avoid, women			MB receives novice who comes to practise shooting in his village
107th day		Final hoax, initiates call on "ghosts of the slain" to have homosexual intercourse with novices		

TABLE IX

Showing Main Features of Initiation into Manhood on Vao.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

RITUAL DEATH AND RE-BIRTH

Five-day period belongs to older layer of culture. Seven- and thirty-day interval belong to the newer culture connected with the Kwat (Mbat) immigrants and hoaxes. 881

In this account of the Vao rites much of the evidence regarding the death and re-birth symbolism that will be given in my more detailed account of initiation on Atchin is lacking. Significant in this respect, however, are the time-periods into which the rite is divided. Thus, the period of 30 Days during which the novices are secluded in the Initiation House, besides representing the menstrual cycle, also corresponds to the 30-Day period of confinement observed by mothers giving birth to children. It will be remembered that the same period of 30 Days' ritual seclusion also follows after the great Maki sacrifice.

After the 30th Day the most important is the 5th, when the prohibition against eating pudding is removed and the novice is allowed for the first time to wash. While this washing is partly hygienic, it is also symbolic of re-birth, and it will be remembered that, in Raga, Suqe would have men die only for five days, and that on Vao it is on the 5th Day after death that, in the older form of belief concerning the Journey of the Dead, the dead man attains full status, and that on this account on that day the mortuary officials and others blacken themselves.[1] The ritual bathing of the novices on the 6th Day is but an extension of the same motive. This is clearly a survival from the older layer of culture.

In the newer form of culture, however, it is the 7th Day that is the day of resurrection on which the dead attain full status. It is significant, therefore, to note that it is on the 7th Day after the operation that the serious hoaxes cease. This is important since it enables us definitely to connect the hoaxes with the 7-Day period of probation as well as with the 30 Days' seclusion, both these periods thus being shown to belong to the same cultural layer, namely that connected with the *Kwat* immigrants. The 7-Day period occurs on two other occasions in the Vao initiation rites. The first is the 7-Day interval elapsing between the announcement of the date of the operation and its performance, recalling the 17, 27 or 37 Days' interval between the announcement and performance of the great Maki sacrifice.[2] The second is the final hoax performed on the 107th Day, and the special insistence on homosexual action on the part of ghosts connected with this hoax is further evidence of the connexion of the *Kwat* (*to-mbat*) people with this practice.[3]

[1] See p. 544.

[2] See p. 376.

[3] Note that the Jews circumcise on the 8th day after birth, which the Muslims call the 7th, the day of birth not being included. Mahummed followed the Jews in selecting this (the 7th) day for the circumcision of his grandsons. Failing this day certain Mahummedans favour the 40th day, or, failing this, the 7th year. The south-western Arabs circumcise on the 7th day or any multiple of 7, namely the 14th, 21st or 28th after birth. In Dahomey the operation is normally performed on the 7th day. The Iraki prefer the 5th or 7th year. (Margoliouth, p. 678: also *The Jewish Encyclopaedia.*)

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

MAN TOO HOLY TO BE INCISED

881 One single instance has come to my notice of a man who was too holy to be incised. This man was Kalo-wŏn, meaning "holy penis," whose position in the Vao genealogy on p. 93 is somewhat obscure. He was not incised because when still young his father had assisted him to such high rank in the Maki that he was referred to as Ta-malo-hat (*hat* being another word for sacred or taboo) and there was no one found bold enough to operate on him.

His position would thus appear to be not unlike that of the Tuitonga or sacred chief of Tonga, who was neither tattooed nor incised.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
OO12 Malekula OO12

CHAPTER XX

THE PILGRIMAGE TO OBA

(INITIATION INTO SEX)

AS has already been pointed out,[1] Initiation into Sex follows after Initiation into Manhood, and is a separate rite re-introduced into the Small Islands in comparatively recent times and carried out, not on the Small Islands themselves, but on one of the matrilineal islands of Oba, Maewo or North Raga in the Northern New Hebrides, of which the chief is Oba.

These islands are collectively regarded as the "Land of Ta-ghar." It is as such the natives regard them when making this journey, and for this reason that I propose to call this rite the Pilgrimage to Oba.[2]

This island lies some sixty miles away over the open sea, and is the chief among those visited by the sea-going canoes of the Small Islands in the trade for pigs. At the outset of all such voyages outside the waters immediately surrounding the Small Islands a special communion rite is held, prayers being offered to the ancestors for its success.[3] Moreover, however hard-headed the bargains in pigs made on these distant islands, the journey to Oba is fraught with mystery, and led by a ghostly shark with which travellers in canoes from Atchin make contact off the island of Wala whence the first such expedition was made. The tale told on Atchin is that a Wala man named Ni-mbel turned himself into a shark and, swimming under water, snatched a fine mat-skirt that had been put out on the beach to dry and, bringing it back, gave it to his wife, whereon all the girls on the Small Islands wanted similar ones. After this each youth wanted a like gift for his girl, and so the rite started, the shark Ni-mbel to this day still leading the canoe and the newly initiated youths returning with fine Oba mats.[4]

The rite is a 10-day one with a re-birth ceremony on the 5th day,[5]

[1] See pp. 473, 475.

[2] According to Suas, 1912, p. 61, the inhabitants of the Lolopwepwe district of Oba actually call their own land *vanua i Takaro*, "land of Takaro (Ta-ghar)," or *vanua kokona*, "holy land."

[3] Examples of such prayers will be given in a future volume.

[4] This story, as told on Atchin, will appear in full in a future volume. For another version see Harrisson, 2, p. 106, who states that the supposed occurrence took place some eighteen generations ago.

[5] Speiser, 3, p. 288, states that the whole rite lasts only five days (see also p. 525).

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

thus showing its connexion with the older form of initiation ritual preceding the introduction of 30- and 7-day periods found in the later forms of Initiation into Manhood.

As already stated,[1] Initiation into Sex as carried out from the Small Islands differs from Initiation into Manhood also in that, while Initiation into Manhood is a communal rite organised for all boys and youths of a given section of society, Initiation into Sex is a much more individual affair, only those boys who, having already undergone one series of compulsory ordeals, feel themselves strong and desirous enough voluntarily to undertake fresh trials offering to go.

Till then they must sleep along with those newly initiated into manhood in the initiation house. But they are nevertheless free to roam about with due circumspection providing they observe the initial restrictions about meeting women. Sooner or later they will learn that their elders are planning a trading expedition to Oba. No youth who has not yet been initiated into manhood may go on these expeditions. But now, if any youth has made up his mind to go, he will, secretly and without saying a word to any one, turn up at the launching of the canoe. Here he will meet others who have similarly but in all secrecy made up their minds, and their ordeals immediately begin.

Such is the case on Atchin, where I myself accompanied one of these expeditions, of which a detailed account will be given in another volume. This is one of the rites of which I did not obtain an account on Vao, so that I am unable to give details of the pilgrimage as undertaken from this island. Godefroy, however, gives a very incomplete account which I will quote here as giving some idea of the essential structure of the rite.

GODEFROY'S BRIEF ACCOUNT

According to Godefroy's account,[2] taken from the lips of Melteg-lil-nale, the elders undertake a special voyage for this purpose. Pigs, fowls and yams are offered to the ancestors, to whom supplications are made to look favourably on the novices, to change the direction of contrary winds and to minimise the force of currents and tidal waves.

On the eve of departure a tall bamboo is set up on the shore facing the beach from which they leave, and on this are hung dry coconuts, conch shells and consecrated herbs. On the day of departure itself the canoe [3] is loaded with provisions, fresh coconuts for drink, and lastly the pigs. According to Godefroy, the novices adorn themselves for the journey,

[1] See p. 476.
[2] Godefroy, 1, 1933, pp. 231-2.
[3] In Godefroy's account it is a modern whaler. On Atchin these voyages always start in the afternoon, so that when night comes there will be stars to guide them, whereas by day there would be nothing but the wind, which often changes. By dawn they reckon to be within sight of Oba.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

their arms decorated with finely plaited arm-badges and their hair with pink and golden ferns. If the rites on Vao are, however, anything like those on Atchin, this statement is far from true. There, the attitude on leaving is, as I have said, one of extreme effacement. Nor would there be any use in so adorning themselves, since the moment they enter the canoe they are made to lie on the floor, covered with mats, stones, paddles, food baskets, coconuts, whole bunches of bananas and all the odds and ends that are carried in the canoe. It is not till they return that they adorn themselves in all the finery of conquering youth.

Once arrived on Oba, the adult members of the expedition go to the inland villages to trade in pigs, leaving the novices and their tutors to carry out the necessary rites, of which the most important are these: [1]

"As they leave the canoe they must ritually bathe, that is to say they must not plunge into the water, but, standing in it only up to their knees, they must, with solemn motions, sprinkle [2] the sea-water copiously over their shoulders, chest, head and arms. Then they unload the provisions which they have brought: wild yams, bananas and coconuts. While bathing and unloading they must remain silent, not uttering a word. Complete silence is obligatory not only now, but during the whole of their sojourn in Oba, as well as during the voyage, both outward and homeward.[3]

"During the whole of the time they maintain a severe fast. It is indeed a hard fast to be restricted to two or three bananas and poor-quality yams a day.

"On the three last days there is a curious rite. For each novice they dig a shallow pit in which they lie on their backs and are covered with plaited coconut leaves. On the fourth day [4] the buried youths rise from the dead, still silent.

"Then, all now being on their feet, they load the canoes with the pigs bought by their elders.

"If the wind is in the proper quarter for sailing home (and they say that at this moment it always is), they pull up the anchor at about four o'clock in the afternoon and next dawn arrive triumphantly at Vao." [5]

Speiser adds (what also occurs on Atchin) that while the novices are away some of their coconut trees and part of their yam-gardens are destroyed.[6]

[1] In the case of the pilgrimage as carried out from Atchin, the Atchinese have a special Lodge built by the shore, which they occupy and in which they enjoy a kind of diplomatic immunity from attack.

[2] Godefroy uses the religious term "asperge."

[3] This is probably a mistake. As the pilgrimage is performed from Atchin, the ban is lifted on the return voyage.

[4] This almost certainly means the fifth day. Confusion as to dates often arises owing to the twenty-four-hour period beginning at sundown.

[5] Godefroy, 1, 1933, pp. 132-3. Here is another confusion. Twice elsewhere he states that the rite lasts ten days.

[6] Speiser, 3, p. 288.

1:Layard. E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

Special song.

"There is a special song belonging to this pilgrimage and to the voyage there and back; but it is kept secret, on pain of death." Godefroy relates that one day, when the young men of Wala had just come back from their initiation on Oba, one of their elders, while resting one afternoon in his house, was surprised by his wife in the act of singing over to himself the sacred Oba song, with the result that she immediately began to embrace him, begging him to sing over to her this chant unknown to the uninitiated and above all to women. "He was unable to resist, and was seduced into betraying the famous Oba song. While he was singing it, however, two youths who happened to be sleeping beneath the gable of a near-by house woke up, and naturally overheard the stanzas of the forbidden song. Horrified, they rose up and fled as fast as their legs would carry them to the *ghamal*, where they told of the wretched man's crime. That night, there was a debate followed by judgment. The culprit saved himself by fleeing, with his wife, in a canoe and lived for many years in exile. Eventually he managed to come back, but not without sacrifice of several large tuskers, which was an expensive business." [1]

I do not know what this special song is. The youths from Atchin learn many songs when on Oba. Those are of two kinds: (*a*) these called "Oba Men's Songs" which are sung also during the Maki and mortuary rites, usually in connexion with canoes and tusked boars, and (*b*) special love-songs called in Atchin *nu-mbo tamar*, examples of which will be given in a future volume.

Appeal to ancestors for fair weather for a safe return.

Godefroy gives a dramatic instance of the special care the ancestors are held to exercise over this expedition. Note that in this instance it is the ancestors who are appealed to direct, through song and sacrifice, in marked contrast to the ordinary weather magic done privately by individual practitioners.

"About four years ago [i.e. about 1928] the young men of the villages of Pete-hul and Togh-vanu undertook their pilgrimage to Oba. On the Seventh Day after their departure the trade wind was blowing with such violence that there appeared to be no hope of them returning on the appointed day, the date of a great feast to be held in honour of their pilgrimage. That evening, at their daily debate, the elders reminded the young men who had stayed at home that in their young days several sea-going canoes had foundered with their crews in a similar high wind on account of the tidal wave produced by a change in the direction of the current. The old men then ordered the immediate sacrifice of several pigs and the formation of a procession to that spot on the beach from which

[1] Godefroy, 1, 1933, pp. 233-4.

1:Layard E.-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

the pilgrims had left. The sacrifice and the accompanying ritual dance took place on the eve[ning?] of this Seventh Day. Next morning some thirty men and children, massed in regular lines of four, five or six,[1] singing at the top of their voices, danced up and down the beach at the water's edge. Hearing them sing, I went down to the beach to watch the procession. I approached and asked the oldest among them what was the purpose of this rite. He answered (I quote his reply word for word): 'We are performing a religious act handed down from our ancestors. By this rite we extend succour to our kinsfolk who have bad weather for their homeward voyage.' Then straightway he left me to rejoin his line.

"On the Tenth Day, in the morning, the pilgrims returned, thanks to the favourable wind which had followed the storm. No one on the island doubted for a moment but that their safe return was the reward for the sacrifices they had made." [2]

SUMMARY

Death and re-birth.

This account, though very abbreviated, affords nevertheless a fair general view of the outline of the rite, which is clearly one of ritual death and re-birth. Ritual bathing is an integral element in all such rites, and the silence and fasting represent a state of death. As will be seen when we come to examine the more detailed account of the Atchin rite, in which the novices are hand-fed and may not move even for excretory purposes, the rite is also one of re-birth in the sense that the novice is ritually regarded as a new-born child.

Resurrection and sex.

A point of great interest is the final half-burial and resurrection of the novice. This feature is found both in the *Kwatu* society of Maewo [3] and in East Santo.[4] It is, however, absent from my Atchin account, but its place is there taken by a hut built on the shore, inside which is the model of a woman shaped in sand, with which the novice, after suffering every kind of sexual indignity, is supposed to go through the motions of copulation. If these are indeed one and the same rite, of which my account omits the first part and Godefroy's the second, it would appear to represent a dramatised apotheosis of the novices' period of trial in a sudden transformation from a state of supposed death to one of mock sexual experience.

[1] From the formation of this dance in regular lines it seems likely that it was a type of maze-dance or *na-leng* (see p. 338).
[2] Godefroy, 1, 1933, p. 232.
[3] See Codrington, 3, p. 90.
[4] See Speiser, 3, p. 287.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

Lesser acts of initiation performed on first visit to any other distant land.

Godefroy's account, as indeed mine also, lays great stress on the fact that the island to which this pilgrimage is made is the traditional home of Ta-ghar. It is, however, interesting to note that, as already stated, the first expedition to *any* distant island, or even to the more distant parts of Malekula south of Unua, are accompanied by similar, though far less elaborate, rites. These will be recorded in my forthcoming volume on Atchin initiation rites. Boys also from Matanavat on the north coast of Malekula have to make a "formal first journey to Malo" where they go through a form of initiation.[1] It would appear thus that in this special expedition undertaken in the Small Islands two elements have become joined: in the first place, a kind of initiation that takes place on the first visit to any distant land; and in the second, the initiation into sex definitely associated with Ta-ghar.

[1] Harrisson, 2, pp. 49, 50.

2: Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1936
OO12 Malekula OO12
Small Islands

wooden image and the monolith itself was carved to represent the ancestral human form, the wooden image having been added only when the art of carving stone was lost, so that what was originally a stone statue became split into two parts, of which the portrait, being of wood, in time disappears, and the plain monolith only remains. Though in Atchin the ritual has become so elaborate as to have largely obscured its original significance, there can be no doubt that in its earlier forms, as still in South-West Bay, the monolith actually represented, and was deemed to be inhabited by, the ghosts of all those ancestors who had previously performed the rite, and, after death, the new sacrificer himself. Hence its importance as a memorial and in the preservation of genealogies and history. Many of the more important figures in Atchin history are thus commemorated, both by their stones and by the preservation of their graves. So strong is the association of ancestors with stones that in semi-mythical accounts they are frequently stated to have had the power to turn themselves into stone during life-time, or to have actually become stone when they died. This process has been carried yet further in the case of those figures associated with the mythology connected with the journey of the dead, who are now to be seen as natural coral blocks standing at various points on the coast along the path trodden by the ghosts of the dead on their way to their future home.

There is no space to do more than mention a few of the most important in the long list of ritual activities in this rich civilization: activities in connection with the belief in ancestors and rites of communion with them; the protracted mortuary ritual; initiation lasting nine months with an intensive period of thirty days in which continuous hoaxes are practised on the luckless novices; the operation of incision; rites connected with the consecration of the long-distance canoes capable of carrying thirty men on trading expeditions to other islands for as far as 80 miles over open sea; a special form of sex initiation performed on the distant island of Omba; the consecration of houses and of tusked boars; magic; their economic life, their fishing, gardening, and trading; their laws of copyright whereby nothing is given, but everything, such as songs, dances, variations in ritual, whole rites, magical formulae, designs for the carving of ancestor-images and of canoe figure-heads, details of house construction and decoration, and a hundred other aspects of their artistically rich culture, is sold by these intensely commercial people at high prices and with due ceremony from individual to individual, village to village, and island to island, thus constituting the framework for the dissemination and blending of endless variations of culture; history and tradition.

One other feature must be mentioned on account of its bearing on the coming of the whites. Mr. Harrisson has already referred to the white-skinned, aquiline-nosed immigrants, who are said to have introduced the latest phases of megalithic culture into that area. On Atchin the equivalent culture-hero is a being called Ta-har, corresponding to the Polynesian Tanggaloa, Banks Islands Tagaro, and the Big Nambas Horo, regarded in Atchin as the benign creator, who is at once a stone and the moon, who made the islands and gave their inhabitants their languages, who arrived in a canoe and introduced the pig and the coconut to ten legendary petromorphic brothers standing on

2: Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1936
OO12 Malekula OO12
Small Islands

liminary grades in order to enhance the dignity of those few who had reached the highest rank. In Atchin, on the other hand, owing to the communal nature of the rite and the mutual help afforded by every member of the village community to every other member, a contrary process was at work, the lower grades being already in process of elimination before the arrival of the white man. With the acquisition of the new wealth this process became speeded up, with the result that by the time of my visit they had all disappeared, so that each and every man, youth, and male piccaninny on the island who was capable of sacrificing a pig belonged to the grade *Mal*, much to the chagrin of those in other communities who had taken a lifetime achieving it. Even the older men on Atchin felt somewhat abashed by the general levelling-up, and, in order to assert their own superiority, a new supernumerary grade had been invented, called *Mel-teg*, literally "The *Mal* who stays at home," referring to the vows of abstinence taken after the *Maki*. It is amusing and significant to note that, according to Mr. Harrisson, the young men have again asserted their equality and that now most men on Atchin possess the title *Mel-teg*, and apparently for the moment, in this respect at any rate, democracy has reasserted itself, for there is no record of any further supernumerary grade.

The younger generation of natives made use of the white man's coming not only in the direction of freeing themselves from the domination of the older men. With the acute dramatic sense which is the essence of their culture they had also made up to some extent for other deprivations which the white man had brought about by using both him and his inventions for the enhancement of their already rich ritual life. Pantomimic representations of various aspects of the white man's activities had been incorporated into the dramatic repertory of the *na-leng* plays and dances, muskets were used to heighten the effect of ritual combats during the sex-initiatory expedition to Omba, into the more serious initiation rites on Atchin, in which hoaxes are performed on the initiates, more than one white man's *tour de force* was incorporated, and many of the masks and images were made lurid by means of Reckett's blue.

It is however significant to note that, even in the case of such a wide departure from native tradition as the abandonment of the manufacture of their own long-distance canoes in favour of white men's whale-boats, the old consecration rites were still continued. At one such consecration rite at which I was present over sixty valuable tusked boars were sacrificed, and the supreme sacrifice was that of a bullock, obtained from a trader, for which all the complicated sacrificial ritual was performed; while in the pantomimic dances the skulls of a bullock and two goats were used as masks.

One final word as to the causes of depopulation. At the time of my visit the population was on the decline. Of physical causes the chief was, as has been seen, the introduction of the musket which turned comparatively harmless semi-ritual combats into lethal battles. Second to this, the introduction of diseases, mainly of dysentery, which wiped out whole families. As to the psychological causes put forward by Rivers and others but denied by Mr. Harrisson, all I am able to say quite definitely is that there was at that time a general belief among the older men and some of the young ones that the race was doomed. The old men remembered the day when native culture was the highest achievement of the human race as they conceived it. The appearance